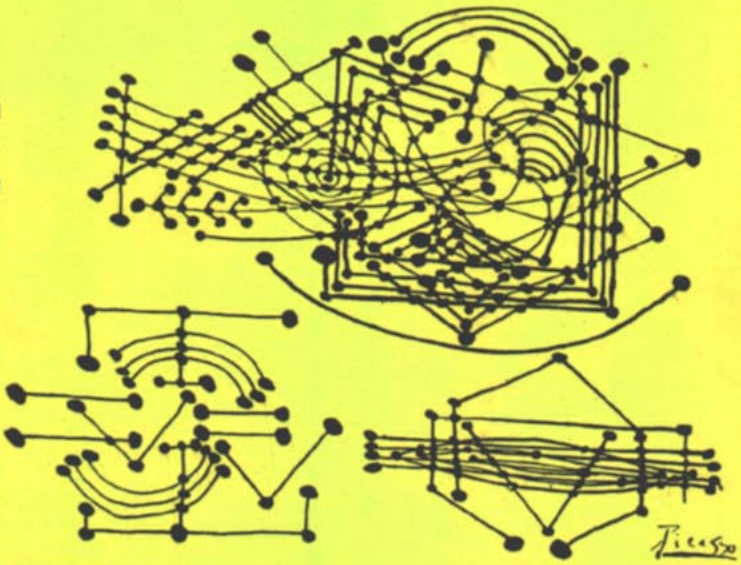
Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER & MELVIN J. LASKY

PRESSURE POLITICS

M.P. & P.R.O.



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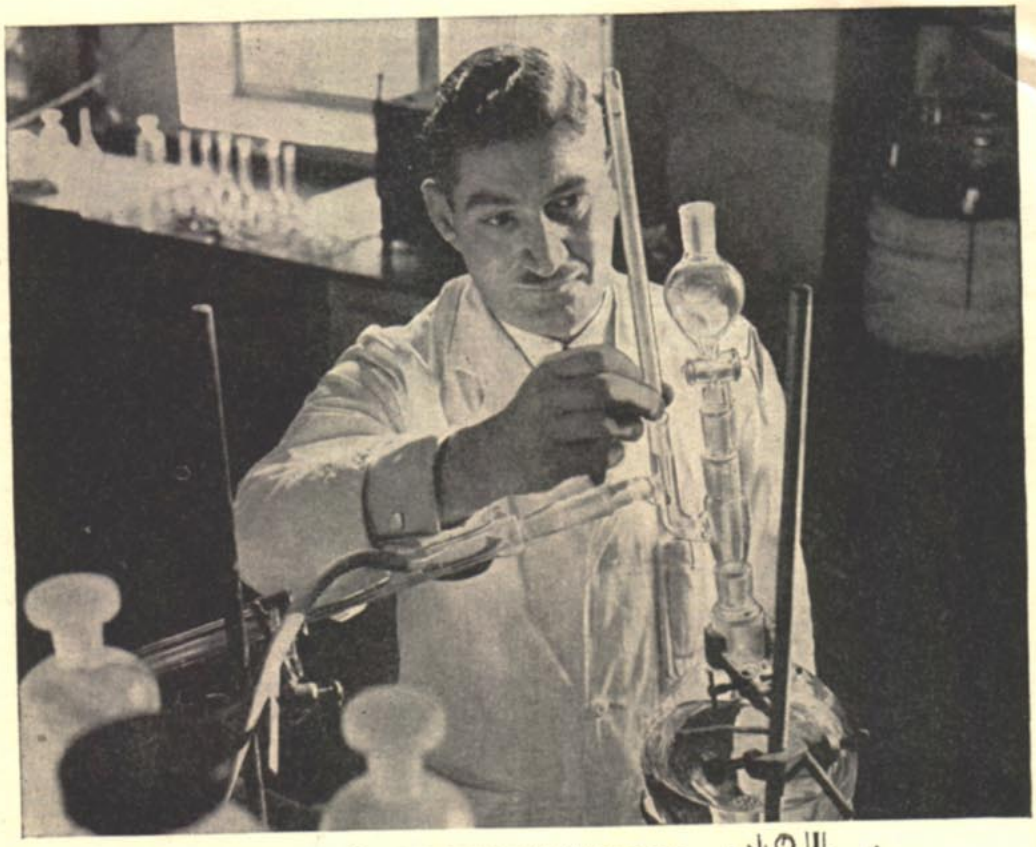

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Ian Waller

Pressure Politics

M.P. & P.R.O.

DURING THE PAST YEAR there has been mounting awareness and uneasiness about the activities of commercial and political pressure groups at Westminster. And there can be little doubt that it is well justified. In the political field the government of the Central African Federation has openly adopted new techniques of persuasion and the East German government have, in a different and far more sinister way, been equally active. The ever widening range of governmental influence over the economy naturally increases the desire of business interests to ensure that their position is either protected or given scope for expansion; and a new class of skilled professional operators has come on the scene to assist them, mostly in the guise of "public relations consultants."

Pressure groups are not, of course, a new phenomenon. Parliament is the natural and proper focal point for any interest with an axe to grind and they will naturally seek to ensure either the election of Members sympathetic to their point of view or hope by the force of their arguments to convert others. The first major industry to come under government control, the nineteenth-century railway companies, took great pains to ensure that their views were well represented on the backbenches, and the railway-director M.P. played a valuable part in debates on the subject. The late Mr. Hudson was a dedicated temperance crusader and the spokesman for the Temperance movement. Trade unions have long had direct representation through the general machinery of the Labour Party and by giving their nominees financial assistance. Other Members have been known as spokesmen for the City, for Cotton, and a dozen other interests. This type of Member brings expert knowledge and genuine conviction to bear in debates: the House knows what he stands for and what his interest is and it will assess the value of his contribution in that light.

In criticising what is now developing one does not condemn the desire of interested groups to make their views known or seek to suggest that the Commons could be—or should be—a collection of men and women utterly detached from every outside interest. One cannot talk in black-and-white terms. No doubt abuses have existed at all times. The question is whether what may have been isolated examples are increasing and becoming part of a perceptible—and more important—acceptable trend. I believe they are.

It is the methods now being used rather than the desire to influence that are open to criticism and about which more should certainly be known and, where necessary, safeguarded against. Equally important, awareness is the best safeguard against the insidious growth of undesirable practices to the point where they become the accepted norm.

IT IS, FOR EXAMPLE, no longer unusual for M.P.s to be paid retainers to represent or advise special interests. The acceptance of lavish hospitality or agreeable and costly foreign tours can easily be justified by the individual on grounds of gaining practical experience, "of seeing for himself," but can also all too often end either in him gaining a completely one-sided picture or in feeling a sense of obligation to the host authority. Again, I wonder whether Sir Winston Churchill or Lord Attlee, with their Victorian standards of rectitude in public life, would have tolerated a situation in which Members in the semi-privileged (and, at least to the outside world, important) role of Parliamentary Private Secretaries

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were openly representing public relations firms and acting as "go between" for the firm's clients and M.P.s.

One cannot of course separate these developments from the changing pattern of social and professional standards generally. The morality of the "expense-account society" cannot be expected to leave Westminster untouched. More important, one must also ask why they develop and how far the low salaries paid to M.P.s and the ludicrously inadequate opportunities provided for genuine overseas travel play their part in encouraging them.

The Prizes

BUT HOWEVER important these elements may be, the first and most vital fact is that the prizes for a successful pressure-group operation can be very great indeed. The classic example is, of course, the one so ably analysed and documented by Professor H. H. Wilson in his book *Pressure Group: the Campaign for Commercial Television* (1960). The story he unfolds, thanks partly to the shameless pride of the main campaigners, is quite breathtaking—the capture of the Conservative Party, the capitulation of a basically hostile Cabinet, and the defeat of the Establishment by a handful of determined men, well placed on the Conservative benches, in the Cabinet, and the Conservative Central Office. Parallel to it went a skilfully planned campaign in the country, the address-feeding of so-called "news items" and bogus letters "to the Editor": (Professor Wilson traced 22 similarly worded ones in provincial papers over different signatures, but all from the same address), and what I regard as the cynical cultivation of every conceivable interest from Roman Catholicism to the Hallé Orchestra. By playing on a general desire for an alternative programme, a synthetic but irresistible public opinion was created which gave a handful, in the words of Mr. Roy Thomson, "a licence to print your own banknotes."

Professor Wilson's book was the subject of a recent House of Lords debate initiated by Lord Reith. It inevitably provoked strong criticism but the debate did not, I think, seriously challenge the key issues raised by Professor Wilson: the origins of the Popular Television Association (formed to campaign in the country for commercial television); its relation to the Conservative Central Office; and the type of public relations campaign that was run. And this surely is the nub of it. One does not have to believe, like Lord Reith, that commercial TV is evil to feel some concern about the way it was achieved.

The Popular Television Association was an apparently independent body and it attracted all-party support for its efficient and expensively run campaign throughout the country. Professor Wilson quotes Lord Woolton, the then party chairman, as giving this account of how it was formed:

"We created the Popular Television Association—you know, ex-Central Office—and put Lord Derby at the head of it."

Lord Woolton was challenged about the accuracy of this by Lord Shackleton in the Lords debate, but he did not deny it. I wonder whether the Association would have managed to attract the same support if its origins were known at the time?

The picture that emerges from Professor Wilson's book is of genuine conviction, commercial interest, political advantage, large-scale propaganda and subtle persuasion all marrying together in pursuit of a target for which there was, initially at least, little public demand. It would be ridiculous to suggest that there was anything wicked or corrupt in it or that any individual action was necessarily wrong. But that does not make the implications of the whole episode any less disturbing, and one can be certain that the lessons of this campaign, probably the first of its kind ever run in this country, will be well absorbed by others with an axe to grind.

ANOTHER INTERESTING CAMPAIGN was recently run by *"Aims for Industry"* against the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, a body whose work in bringing power to the Highlands has won the praise of Scottish M.P.s and local authorities of all parties.

Initiating a debate on this campaign on December 21, 1960, Mr. George Thomson, Labour M.P. for Dundee East, alleged that its origins lay in the fears of some Scottish landowners that their land might be taken over for further schemes. There is, of course, no reason why they should not protest about any particular scheme. But the campaign was not limited to this but was directed against the whole concept of hydro-generation, the efficiency of the Board, etc., and is widely credited in Scotland with having led the Scottish Secretary to order an inquiry into the Board and to delay further developments. Whether or not this is justified is

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irrelevant. The interesting thing is how the campaign is alleged to have been run. Mr. Thomson described it in these words:

> How is *"Aims for Industry"* conducting its campaign? First, it had to find out where the Highlands were, so it sent an emissary—I am told a Mr. T. A. Cutbill, who describes himself as editorial director of *"Aims for Industry,"* from Fetter Lane, London. Mr. Cutbill visited Inverness. According to my information, his purpose was to discover and whip up pockets of dissatisfaction with the Hydro Board. He may, perhaps, be consoled to know that he is the latest of a long but rather ignoble lineage of agents sent up from London to divide and stir up dissatisfaction among the Highlanders. Anyhow, those investigations were made.
>
> Then the *"Aims for Industry"* organisation went into that operation at which it is particularly expert. These hidden persuaders started their campaign to brainwash the citizens of Scotland. Since midsummer, they have been supplying the Press with ready-made articles and so-called editorial comments, which have been used in whole or in part by local papers in the area of the Hydro Board. There can be no doubt that very few of the letters which have appeared in the Press supporting the attack on the Board have come from within the Board's area. There is reason to believe that some of the letters which have come from within the Board's area were not written by the individuals who signed them but were passed on to them from outside the area of the Board by friends who asked for signatures.
>
> There was a need on the part of *"Aims for Industry"* for some sort of Scottish façade, what we know in political jargon as a front organisation, so *"Aims for Industry"* set up what is called the Scottish Power Investigation Committee....

Whether Mr. Thomson's allegations are justified or not, I cannot say. But in preparing a TV programme on the issue last year, I found that they were certainly widely believed in Scotland among those interested in the Hydro Board's work. Unfortunately *"Aims for Industry"* refused to take part in the programme to enable the charges to be answered—an unusual display of modesty on the part of a P.R. organisation.

THE SECOND new development is the emergence of professional advisers or "fixers," so-called public relations consultants anxious to assist others—and themselves—to squeeze every conceivable drop of commercial or political advantage out of Whitehall and Parliament. Gone is the crude and petty squalor revealed by the Lynskey Tribunal in 1948 with its miserable tale of sausages, suit lengths, and bottles of whisky; of a spiv and a weak gullible junior minister. Today's operators are bland; they belong to the right clubs and entertain in the best restaurants; they bandy first names; they trade on knowing the right people. How far they succeed is difficult to assess; certainly they enrich themselves, thanks largely to the remarkable naïveté of so many business men, and some of them, I know, are a pest to ministers and senior civil servants.

Whitehall's machinery is probably adequate to thwart either blatant exploitation of ministers —the cash value in advertising terms of, for example, a ministerial visit to a factory can be considerable—or of sheer importuning for licences, grants, or other State aid. But, of course, this sort of thing is really only a marginal activity. Today's persuaders do not seek to gain their ends by corrupt means; they aim instead to create a "climate of opinion" in Whitehall, in Parliament, and among the public that consciously wishes to satisfy its desires, and feels it is right to do so.

As I have already said, it is thoroughly desirable that major interests should be authoritatively represented at Westminster. Ideally, and certainly the general trend before the war, was for those interests to be represented by men who had direct personal experience or at least genuine conviction before entering parliament. Today few major interests are directly represented. Leading industrialists have been increasingly reluctant to come into politics—who would one say now speaks decisively for authoritative opinion in the city, steel, chemicals, aircraft, or any other major industry? On the other side of the House the trade unions' traditional dependence on the Labour Party as such to represent their interests makes the absence of leading trade union figures less significant. But one cannot help feeling that it would be better if there were more major trade union leaders on the Labour benches rather than second-level nominees. At the moment, only Mr. Ray Gunter (of the Transport Salaried Staffs Association), Mr. Douglas Houghton (of the Inland Revenue Staff Association), Mr. Walter Padley (of the Shopworkers) and Mr. Robert Edwards (of the Chemical Workers) really fall into this class.

With the decline in direct representation has inevitably gone the growth in indirect or hired representation. The most obvious and dangerous feature of this is that a seat in the Commons will rapidly come to be valued more for the perks that can be picked up than for the opportunity of political service. As an example of how

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this can develop I cite the case of a prospective candidate for a safe seat who was approached a year or so before the last election with the proposal that he should become a Public Relations firm's economic adviser. We know, continued the letter, that you are likely to be elected to Parliament at the next election. In which case you would be of even more value to us!

But here again one must be careful not to exaggerate. Becoming an M.P. must obviously enhance a man's standing and with it his potential earning-power. A mediocre journalist can become an authoritative writer; an incompetent businessman, who is also an M.P., can give an impression of dignity and respectability (if nothing else) to a board (peers even more so, as impecunious scions of aristocracy long ago discovered); a lawyer becomes more sought after—and the legal profession have notoriously protected their interests at Westminster, in no way more remarkably than granting M.P. barristers the virtually automatic right to take silk.

NONETHELESS I THINK that all these are significantly different in character from the concept of a man becoming an M.P. and then becoming the professional spokesman of one or more interests. Sometimes, of course, he may have a genuine interest in the subject, sometimes it may be openly, as with a company director, or the spokesman of some corporate body. This latter practice is questionable but fades into insignificance beside hidden or indirect representation particularly through public relations firms.

The growth of this indirect representation has surely made a farce of the tradition of "declaring an interest." Often, indeed, the House may not know that an M.P. is retained by a P.R. firm, let alone whether he is speaking and acting generally in the interests of his firm's clients. The *Directory of Directors* provides a ready check on business in public companies, and the fact that directorships in private companies and shareholdings are at least open to inspection by inquiring journalists provides some limited sanction in these two fields.

The present position would certainly seem to justify the Commons requiring, as the Advertising Inquiry Council have urged, that M.P.s should be obliged to make a statutory declaration of their business interests each session. I can see no possible objection to this. As a public figure an M.P. has no right to conceal from the House and the electorate what his interests are. Nor will he wish to unless he has something to hide.[1]

Outsiders and Insiders

THE THREE ASPECTS of pressure-group operations that I want to examine in some detail are: (1) representation of outside interests by Members of Parliament both directly and also indirectly through public relations firms; (2) the general activities of public relations firms; (3) finally, and most important, the efforts of overseas governments to influence Parliament.

Representation of outside interests by Members is undoubtedly growing. Sometimes it is open; for example, accepting directorships—and this obviously is most common in the Conservative party and is certainly not new. Some professional associations also have representatives. I am thinking in particular of the Police Federation for which Mr. James Callaghan has acted as spokesman; and the Educational Institute for Scotland (the Scottish N.U.T.) who have had the services of two Scottish M.P.s, a Socialist, Mr. George Thompson, and a Conservative, Commander C. E. Donaldson. There are no doubt other examples.

Let me hasten to say I see nothing to criticise in the activities of these three Members. They are absolutely open about their connections and Mr. Callaghan's is included in *Who's Who*. The House knows whom they are speaking for, and the organisations are clearly of a different nature from commercial pressure groups.

A special case can clearly be made for professional associations of these two types since they must obviously (particularly in the case of the Police Federation) avoid direct political ties and cannot therefore be specifically represented through the Labour Party. Nonetheless one must, I think, ask whether it would be desirable for this practice to grow. There are also obvious difficulties in it as, for example, Commander Donaldson must have found when the E.I.S. came into sharp conflict with the Government over the Scottish teachers' pay award.

Nor, for the purposes of this article, am I going to discuss at length the question of open representation of commercial interest except to say that the rate at which it is increasing

[1] Mr. Andrew Roth's enterprise in compiling a register of business interests of M.P.s is a valuable step in this direction but is inevitably limited. Nonetheless some interesting things have emerged.

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is interesting. The Roth analysis of *The Business Interests of Members of Parliament* reveals the following facts about the composition of the House of Commons in 1961:

Over 330 M.P.s hold a business connection of the order of a company directorship or better; this includes no less than 280 out of 365 Conservative M.P.s (or 7 out of 9) and 50 of 258 Labour Members (one in five).

According to Mr. Roth at least a score of M.P.s became directors in the two years after the 1959 general election; the 330 M.P.s hold a total of 490 directorships, an increase of 70 since 1959. And there are 280 positions such as chairman, partner, managing director, etc., an increase of 80.

It is interesting, too, to note the areas which have shown the biggest expansion: Investment Trusts were represented by 34 M.P.s in 1959, now by 48; Insurance 41 to 58; Construction and Engineering 19 to 31; Export-Import from 20 to 25, with the emphasis heavily on those engaged in East-West trade; Advertising and Public Relations from 18 to 27; Entertainment has jumped from 13 to 25 (and the significant thing here is the emergence of a substantial block of M.P.s connected with companies interested in establishing commercial radio in Britain).

To some extent, of course, these figures reflect the increase in the number of Conservative M.P.s and the changing economic structure both of the party and the country, as for example the growth of those connected with engineering and construction. But neither Export-Import, with the emphasis on East-West trade, nor commercial radio fall into this category. And 27 M.P.s representing the relatively small advertising-P.R. trade is both grotesquely disproportionate and of very questionable value.

BUT IN ADDITION TO this large element of open representation there is a widening range of indirect or concealed representation, that is as advisers. How wide it is impossible to say. Very often (and this is the most serious aspect) it is undisclosed, and one keeps on coming across the most unexpected people either acting for a particular firm or being retained by a public relations firm to look after the interests of their clients. Indeed, the immediate reaction of many firms likely to be affected by government action now seems to be, look for an M.P. to peddle their cause.

Only the other day I heard of a proprietary medicine firm, fearing the possible effects of the Ministry of Health's drive to reduce prescription costs, deciding that it needed political help. In addition to making straightforward representations to the M.P. for the constituency in which their factory was based, they also decided to secure paid representation. The last I heard was that they were considering approaching one of two Members, neither of whose names surprised me. Both already represent a wide range of interests, but neither, so far as I know, has ever shown any interest in medicine or was likely to be deterred by that. What the final outcome is I do not know, nor even whether the approach has been made. But I do not think this is an isolated instance.

An instructive example of indirect representation through a public relations firm was published a year ago in the *Sunday Telegraph* (June 18, 1961). Mr. Francis Noel Baker told me that after he had made some comments in the Commons on the proposal to run "Minicabs" in London, he was approached by another M.P. and invited to a dinner in one of the Commons private dining rooms. The purpose of the dinner was to meet Mr. Michael Gotla, Managing Director of Welbeck Motors, the firm responsible for "Minicabs."

The M.P. was Mr. Ronald Bell, Conservative member for South Bucks., and the dinner was, it transpired, backed by a public relations firm, Michael Clarke-Hall and Associates, who were running Welbeck Motors' P.R. campaign. Mr. Bell, who is listed in *Who's Who* as a barrister, is also what he described to me as an "advisory director" of Michael Clarke-Hall's. He explained the dinner party in the following words:

> Welbeck Motors are seeking to introduce a service which is controversial and a live political issue. The directors wanted to meet M.P.s who were interested in the subject. I was asked if I could help them to meet politicians of both parties to discuss the problems involved. I asked a few Members who I knew were interested if they would like to meet Mr. Gotla.
>
> There were several Labour and Conservative M.P.s and peers at the dinner and we had an amicable discussion. Many controversial questions were put to Mr. Gotla and his fellow directors. I believe that it helped both sides to see the problems involved.

AN EVEN MORE NOTEWORTHY example because of the blandishments offered, the fact that a foreign firm was involved and that it was interested in British Government contracts, was the visit to Lockheeds, the American aircraft manufac-

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turers, eighteen months ago. Assisting in the arrangements for this were a firm of business consultants, Michael Parker, Ltd., and Dr. Reginald Bennett, the Conservative M.P. for Fareham. I am not sure what Dr. Bennett's connection with this firm was but it was close enough for him to seek me out at the Commons to explain the whole business within a few hours of my first contacting Michael Parker's. The trip itself was certainly conducted on a lavish scale—not only were the M.P.s invited, but their wives as well—and must have cost the firm thousands of pounds, an investment which they presumably thought would reap rich dividends.

Two M.P.s who turned down invitations, both for the same very proper reasons, were Sir Arthur Vere Harvey and Colonel George Wigg, the former invited presumably because of his intimate knowledge of the aircraft industry, the latter for his interest in defence. Their attitude, which seems to me to be the only possible one, was summed up by Sir Arthur in a debate on the aircraft industry on March 22, 1962, when, referring to the trip, he said:

> I would not dream of accepting. I was asked, but I think that one puts oneself under an obligation if one accepts such invitations. I do not say this because some hon. Members went. I mention it merely to show the extent to which the Americans will go to influence foreign Parliaments. It is going on all over the world.

Nonetheless the habit is clearly catching on as aircraft firms find themselves in difficulties. Short Brothers have been very active lately—although on nothing like this scale—in taking M.P.s over to Belfast to see a military transport plane they are anxious to sell to the Government. One M.P. who rejected the invitation on principle told me that he wrote to the chairman and said that if directors wished to tell him anything about the plane he would be happy to invite them to lunch with him at the Commons—an invitation which was accepted and clearly puts the whole relationship on a far more satisfactory level both for the Member and, I would have thought, the Company.

One should not overlook the possibilities that exist in the House of Lords. With their more fluid time-table and procedure they provide an ideal forum for special pleading and its full potential has, I suspect, only recently been appreciated both by some of their Lordships and by public relations firms. What, after all, could be a more suitable setting for one of those suave P.R. consultants than a quiet lunch in the House of Lords restaurant for his clients? The Commons is valuable enough, but the Lords has social appeal as well.

An interesting example of a Peer who has blossomed in the Lords is Lord Stonham, formerly Mr. Victor Collins, Labour M.P. for Shoreditch. To-day he is one of the most active members of the Upper House.

One of Lord Stonham's many interests is the Road & Rail Association, of which he is chairman, and which advocates better transport policies with particular emphasis on the railways. In this role he frequently writes letters to the Press and has presided over the launching of two pamphlets. Because of this I approached him two years ago to interview him for a B.B.C. programme I was preparing.

I assumed that the Association was a collection of individuals who had been inspired to public action by a spontaneous desire to see different transport policies. What I did not know at the time was that it was in fact the creation of that fertile P.R. man, Mr. Claude Simmons, whose client in this case was the British Transport Commission.

The Commission can no doubt justly argue that they are forced into these subterfuges by the immense volume of hostile propaganda from road haulage interests. They are certainly engaged in a ruthless competitive battle. One has no desire to curtail their commercial activities, but one must also I think question whether a public corporation should adopt these tactics. On purely practical grounds I am far from clear what this exercise has achieved.

The Persuaders

The activities of P.R. firms at Westminster take a variety of forms. Generally they aim, as in the instances I have cited, at putting their client's views before interested M.P.s, or building up a pressure group, or creating (in the jargon of the trade) "a favourable image" for their client; to secure, one way or another, favourable legislative or administrative treatment; or to combat political hostility.

But Parliament can have a variety of other uses too. A dinner party in one of the dining-rooms, even if there is no particular motive behind it, provides an agreeable background for a P.R. man to impress his clients that he moves

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in influential circles—and there's never any difficulty in finding a few Members willing to fill in time before a division by eating a free meal. Parliament can also provide a useful publicity forum for the promotion of a commodity, as a famous frozen food firm tried in 1960; it is also very useful on occasions to be able to make use of the House of Commons address for business purposes.

The publicity given to some of these abuses a year ago culminated in the tabling of a Commons motion condemning the use of Commons dining-rooms for commercial purposes and instructing the Kitchen Committee to ensure that "no letting is made to any Member acting as the agent of a commercial interest." This, I am sure, had a very salutary effect and the risk of this sort of exercise is now greatly reduced.

Abuse of Commons dining-room facilities by itself might not be worth labouring. But it seems to me that it is important as the top of the iceberg, the visible and until a year ago increasingly blatant symptom of the growing commercial exploitation of the House of Commons. This is an exploitation which, when done by outside bodies simply to cash in on the prestige value of the Commons, is degrading to Parliament, but where Members themselves become involved is corrupting.

A FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPT of Public Relations is that some bait must be provided to arouse interest, to create a favourable impression, to impose a sense of obligation, however tenuous. The whole loathsome round of P.R. parties, lunches, dinners, trips, gifts, and gimmicks is based on this fundamentally immoral assessment of human nature, and every journalist sees only too much of the endless outpouring of invitations all outbidding each other in the lavishness of their entertainment and their would-be "smartness." An inordinate amount of money is wasted on this sort of nonsense and ultimately the taxpayer finances this parasitical non-productive trade. P.R. men are great name-droppers too. After I had written some critical remarks about one of them, he told me: "I was week-ending with Selwyn at Chequers when it appeared. He immediately advised me that it was libellous. . . ."

Most P.R. activities are aimed primarily at journalists, the immediate aim being to get a mention in the news columns. Pressure on M.P.s is a more sophisticated business. Not the least of P.R. successes has been to convince businessmen that "dealing with" and "understanding" journalists or politicians is a specialised task. On the political front their great strength is their supposed knowledge of the way around Whitehall, of how to get in touch with "the right person," of being able to ensure a viewpoint is understood. Hence the psychological importance of being able to take a client to dinner in the House and of "name-dropping," the efforts to get Ministers and Civil Servants to accept invitations to intimate little parties or lunches. Many industrialists are astonishingly innocent, particularly about politics, and are sitting ducks for this sort of confidence trick. It is, in this context, interesting how many P.R. men have come from government P.R. service or have worked in the Conservative Central Office and so can be presumed to know the political ropes.

Some P.R. men specialise in political jobs. Frank O'Shanohun of O'Shanohun Associates, for example, handled the recent visit of the President of Senegal, and I have a pile of hand-outs, including two ready-made articles which, if ever published in a newspaper, would be assumed by innocent newspaper readers to have been the work of a journalist on the spot rather than of a P.R. hand-out. One is headed:

AN AFRICAN VOICE OF MODERATION AND TOLERATION.
BRITAIN'S GUEST IS STATESMAN POET.
By a Special Correspondent.

The other:

SENEGAL: LAND OF INDEPENDENCE WITHOUT TEARS.
By a Special Correspondent.

For the recent Kenya Conference, K.A.D.U. was represented in Britain by Mr. Ronald Simms, late Chief P.R.O. at the Conservative Central Office and before that organiser of the Commercial Television campaign. Central Africa has, of course, *"Voice and Vision."* The East German Government Chamber of Foreign Trade uses Notley Advertising, Ltd.

But the doyen of the political P.R.O.s is Mr. Toby O'Brien of the E. D. O'Brien Organisation and another former head of Conservative Central Office publicity. He clearly enjoys politics and insists that he would never take on a cause that he didn't believe in. His choice is not, perhaps, to everyone's taste. It includes Katanga and President Tshombe through his representation of *Union Minière* and Tangan-

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yika Concessions, Ltd.; he is P.R.O. here for the Portuguese Government, with special reference to what he calls (*Sunday Telegraph*, December 10, 1961) "one-sided views on Angola in Britain"; he also handles the Spanish Government's tourism campaign here.

One cannot help feeling it would be far better both for the public and for the reputation of public relations if representation of foreign governments were left alone. All Governments have opportunities and resources to put their own cases openly through their embassies. It seems very undesirable for P.R. firms to embark on the delicate task of promoting foreign political interests and gratuitously putting all the modern techniques of persuasion at their disposal as well as possible contact with politically important figures.

LINKED, SO FAR AS the House of Commons is concerned, with the question of pressure from overseas governments is the question of overseas travel for Members. M.P.s should obviously have the opportunity to travel abroad to study political and economic development and equally obviously few can afford to finance it themselves. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Inter-Parliamentary Union both do useful work and are assisted by Treasury grants. But it is very limited indeed. In 1960 the C.P.A.'s expenditure on financing visits of ten delegations to ten Commonwealth countries was £4,893; the I.P.U. spent about £9,000.

The range of overseas trips offered to M.P.s by interested parties is quite startling: the wine fields of Rhine and Moselle, the roads of Europe, visits to East Germany and other satellite states, Central Africa, comprehensive tours of the United States sponsored by the American Government, and holidays (for wives as well) in the Soviet Union. The East Germans are said to be tightening up a bit but at one time, I am told, they even used to offer visiting M.P.s a few pounds pocket money.

According to the U.S. Embassy in London, between 1951 and 1961 a total of 81 M.P.s have visited the U.S. with some sort of assistance from the American Government. These include two special delegations: one a group of eight who were invited to observe the Presidential Election in 1960 and 12 in 1959 in connection with the British General Election. Others have gone under varying programmes, mostly 60-day leadership grants. These include the payment of all fares and a small daily allowance while in America.

Last year the Soviet Government provided holidays for about a dozen mostly left-wing M.P.s and in many cases their wives. They were invited by a Soviet Embassy official and in most cases had a month's stay in the Soviet Union. An active supporter of this was Mr. Konni Zilliacus who was quoted in the Press as saying:

> The entire cost is being met by the Russians. It's a jolly good holiday but the M.P.s will also meet their opposite numbers as well as see the country. A lot of these exchanges between Britain and Russia are going on. In the past year there has been a big increase in the number of Russian visitors to this country, official delegations, as well as tourists. I believe the more ordinary people can meet each other and see how they live in other countries the better.

According to Mr. Zilliacus these trips have been going on for several years and included Conservative as well as Labour Members.

Surely it is very undesirable, as well as humiliating, for M.P.s to be made largely dependent on privately sponsored trips, possibly with ulterior motives behind them. And it must certainly lay the way open to abuse. Questions in the House a year ago showed a good deal of concern about this and a general desire that there should be more travel under semi-official auspices by larger grants to the C.P.A. and I.P.U. The possibility of a limited travel allowance for M.P.s is also worth considering.

THE P.R. CAMPAIGN for the Central African Federation is particularly noteworthy as the most skilful and probably the first professionally-planned pressure-group exercise on behalf of an overseas government. The P.R. firm is of course *Voice & Vision*, a subsidiary of Colman, Prentis & Varley who ran the Conservative party general election campaign. Their task has not been purely confined to organising the now well-known trips of M.P.s to Rhodesia, but also includes purely professional advice on improving P.R. and advertising methods both in Salisbury and in the High Commission offices in London.

It is widely believed that *Voice & Vision* were chosen by Sir Roy Welensky on the advice of Mr. Macmillan and Mr. Iain Macleod—something the latter, at least, must have rued, as the skill of V. & V.'s campaign played no small part

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in building up hostility to him last year and culminated in a damaging backbench revolt. He was certainly showing no enthusiasm last June. When asked about the attempts to influence policies by commercial or P.R. people on the B.B.C. programme *Gallery* (June 15, 1961) Mr. Macleod replied:

> Yes, I think that inevitable with Africa playing such a dominant part in the world scene. One does get a little worried about the influence of some firms who have particular interests in Africa, public relations firms.

Voice & Vision's main activity has been to take groups of M.P.s out to the Federation for a fortnight's tour. Forty in all have gone so far; 19 Conservative, 20 Labour, and one Liberal. There have also been some journalists, two Church of Scotland ministers, and representatives of the Federation of British Industry and the National Farmers' Union. The man actually organising this aspect and responsible for choosing the Members is Mr. McWhinnie, formerly Lobby Correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, who naturally has an intimate knowledge of Westminster.

One striking feature of the list of M.P.s selected is that it does not include a single Labour party specialist in colonial affairs nor conspicuous critics of the Federation. The great majority of Labour M.P.s are trade union members who had not previously shown any great interest in colonial affairs. Only two—Mr. Richard Marsh and Dr. Dickson Mabon—turned out to be critical, yet the majority opinion in the Party is overwhelmingly hostile to Sir Roy Welensky. The Labour Members in fact represented a small minority. But minority opinion in the Conservative party—the small left-wing group who share Labour's criticisms of the Federation—was quite unrepresented. Surely a very strange balance.

The Conservative list certainly contains more members with a specialised knowledge, but all I think sympathetic to Sir Roy. This lack of members with an expert knowledge is very important, and must obviously reduce the value of the offer to let members meet whomever they wish. Unless a Member is an expert, is he likely to know whom to ask for or will he fall in with the organised programme? Mr. Marsh and Dr. Mabon took the precaution of first being briefed by experts as to who and what to see. They certainly met everyone they asked to see although Mr. Marsh says this inevitably involved overcoming natural inhibitions about asking one's host to go to trouble and possible expense to satisfy an individual wish.

Again, how representative were the organised tours? I cannot possibly judge. The African nationalists were very critical and at one time refused to co-operate with *Voice & Vision*. As Mr. Marsh put it to me, "You can meet a Liberal-minded European and a violently extremist nationalist. It can be said you have met 'both sides.' But have you really?"

IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY what effect this campaign has had. It looks as though it has failed to save the Federation or sway, this year at least, Government policy over Northern Rhodesia. But, as I have already said, I don't think there is much doubt that it played a big part in whipping up opposition to Mr. Macleod in the Conservative party last year.

In the attempt to build up public opinion these trips undoubtedly produced some short-term results. Their most conspicuous success, although probably the least valuable because of the suspicion surrounding those who accepted the invitations, was the fact that several Labour M.P.s abstained in the Commons from voting for an opposition motion criticising the Federation last year.

One can also point to pro-Welensky articles written by the M.P.s on their return—not only in national papers, but in local ones and trade union journals. There are the more intangible things such as lecture tours and reports back to constituency parties and the influence that the M.P.s may have had on their colleagues and other leaders of opinion.

On the debit side, so far as Sir Roy is concerned, is the suspicion that the whole exercise created, both here and among Africans. The very fact that he felt it necessary to rely on commercial propagandists hardened hostility to him in the Labour party.

But there is one valuable by-product of it all. The controversy has created greater awareness among M.P.s and the public of the growing use of skilled propagandists, and of the subtle techniques at their disposal for advancing political argument—and the advantage this gives to those who can afford to pay.

FINALLY, the most controversial pressure group of the lot—the East Germans. In addition to the desire, in common with other Eastern bloc countries, to win ideological sup-

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port from Western Parliamentarians, they have the particular aims of securing diplomatic recognition and creating, both at home and abroad, the impression that they have sympathetic support in the West.

I am not concerned with the question whether East Germany should be recognised, or of the nature of Herr Ulbricht's régime. Neither are directly relevant to the specific question of the existence of the pressure group and the behaviour of some M.P.s—except in so far as one would have thought that the highly charged political atmosphere surrounding the régime behoved politicians to behave with some restraint and sense of responsibility, particularly when they are in the country, and to have some regard for national policy even if they do not agree with it. Nor am I going to discuss the British Government's attitude beyond saying that by encouraging trade and at the same time trying to hold themselves aloof from it as if it was too immoral to touch, they get the worst of both worlds. The West Germans do far more trade with East Germany than the British; the French do it openly on a Governmental basis. We probably lose trade, put reputable British industrialists in a very ambiguous position, and encourage the abuses that are now going on and which could bring British political standards into contempt in West and East alike.

Unfortunately, as the controversy surrounding the last two years of the Leipzig Trade Fair shows all too clearly, some M.P.s have failed to show any realisation of the extent to which their presence is welcomed for political reasons by the East German Communists and skilfully exploited to give the impression that they belong to an official parliamentary delegation. Indeed, some of the Members have themselves done a good deal to encourage this particularly last year. This spring the unprecedented warning of the dangers of visits being exploited given by Mr. Heath in the House had, I think, some effect.

But last year, for example, two of the main figures, Mr. Burnaby Drayson and Brigadier Terence Clarke (both Conservative M.P.s) sent out invitations for a party at Leipzig decorated with the Union Jack and the House of Commons crest. Mr. John Woollam was quoted on the East German radio as referring to "the British delegation"—although he subsequently told me that this was used out of its context. This year about half a dozen M.P.s were there at one time, some under the auspices of Mr. Rudi Sternberg, an astute British naturalised businessman who controls a big share of East German-British trade. They were photographed in a group talking to Herr Walter Ulbricht; they toured the fair together (earning the nickname "Sternberg's circus" from critical British exhibitors).

The point at issue is not whether British firms should trade with East Germany, or whether M.P.s should visit that country in their private capacities as businessmen. It is whether they distinguish sufficiently clearly between their private role as businessmen and their public position as Members of Parliament; and whether some use their position to get business—and are encouraged to do so for political reasons by the East Germans.

Two interesting views on the issue were given after this year's Fair by Sir Stephen McAdden, Conservative M.P. for Southend East, who went there independently of any organised group in connection with his own business, and Mr. Desmond Donnelly, Labour M.P. for Pembroke, referring to what he had seen as a journalist.

Sir Stephen said (*Sunday Telegraph*, March 18, 1962): "It is perfectly true that a discussion took place at one of the receptions with Herr Ulbricht. There was an attempt to talk about politics, but I said I was interested only in business and not politics. I told Herr Stolph, the Deputy Prime Minister, that I was interested in building up trade. I warned him that he should not place too much reliance on people who came from England and disagreed with their own country's viewpoint and supported the East German viewpoint. I told him that if people were not loyal to their own country, they would not be loyal to the East Germans."

Mr. Desmond Donnelly said he had seen something of the opportunities for the use of the mantle of a Member of Parliament. "The dividing line is between a person who is legitimately engaged in trade as a normal profession and a person who uses his M.P. status to make introductions which could not be done through normal channels. M.P.s should not accept Communist hospitality in the present state of international relations, nor act as entrepreneurs in the Cold War for personal gain. I have also felt deeply at the sight of British M.P.s being used as vehicles for Communist propaganda such as the East German campaign for recognition."

I should explain that most trade with East Germany is done through import/export agents

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who draw commission on the deal and who are clearly dependent on whether they have an *entrée* to the state purchasing departments. The practice of using agencies sometimes of a political nature, originated in other Communist countries in the early days of East/West trade, partly probably because of their inexperience in trade with the West. Incidentally, the high-sounding British Council for the Promotion of International Trade, condemned as a Communist-front organisation in the House by Mr. Erroll, President of the Board of Trade, charges commission on any business it helps get! But there is a growing, and welcome, tendency for most East European state purchasing organisations to insist on dealing direct with manufacturers here. Rumania, for one, now insists on a certificate that no commission is being paid to any third party.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that it has been a lucrative business. A relative (and unexpected) newcomer to the world of big business is Mr. Arthur Lewis, the Labour M.P. for East Ham North, who first made news by lying down outside the Savoy Hotel to stop blacklegs during the Savoy strike some years ago; at Leipzig this year he was a prominent figure in its leading hotel, the Astoria.

Business interests in East Europe among politicians crosses party boundaries. There is Ian Mikardo on the Left of the Labour Party; staunch Conservatives like Brigadier Clarke, Mr. Drayson, specialising in East Germany as directors of Mr. Rudi Sternberg's group of companies (Mr. Sternberg controls a major share in the trade through his £3,500,000 contract for export of potash from East Germany); Conservative Peer, Lord Boothby, and Socialist M.P., Sir Leslie Plummer, joined forces years ago for a tour of East Europe to study trade prospects. They have both recently joined the board of Consolidated Foundry Plant, Ltd., a big export consortium doing extensive engineering business in East Europe. The ramifications seem endless. The East German Chamber of Foreign Trade employs a Public Relations firm, Notley Advertising, Ltd., to promote its interests here and, until last summer, Mr. Drayson was its adviser on East Germany, and Brigadier Clarke was certainly then associated with them; Brigadier Clarke and Mr. Drayson are both members of the rather obscure Conservative backbenchers' 1962 Committee formed last year, whose principal founder members were backbenchers who had been to Leipzig; Mr. Drayson is secretary of the all-party East-West Trade Committee of which Lord Boothby is chairman and Sir Leslie Plummer is vice-chairman.

After this year's Leipzig Fair, I wrote (*Sunday Telegraph*, March 11):

> I have no doubt that the reason Mr. Sternberg and Mr. Drayson are so anxious to bring M.P.s out (to Leipzig) is to build up a pressure group at Westminster sympathetic to East Germany.

Neither has challenged this statement, but Lord Boothby, who is a director of one of Mr. Sternberg's companies, Tolvision, Ltd., in a letter the following week (*Sunday Telegraph*), answered the question of whether M.P.s should go to Leipzig in these words:

> Trade with the Iron Curtain countries has necessarily to be conducted or at least initiated at a fairly high political level.

A moment's reflection on the standing of M.P.s going to Leipzig on these organised trips is a sufficient answer to this. And one may also ask why is Britain unique in needing this political intervention? So far as I know, no other Western country seems to find it necessary to have parties of M.P.s at Leipzig.

But perhaps the best answer to Lord Boothby came the same day in a published letter from Mr. Richard Hill (of the Steel Company of Wales) who was at Leipzig:

> It is surely wrong for any M.P. to place himself in circumstances where he is representing a commercial interest and at the same time, by implication, his political position is furthering that interest by, for example, direct contact with Ministers of the East German Government.
>
> One would have thought that the traditional honesty of British commercial practice would be entirely adequate for the negotiation of business with East Germany, as it is in other countries behind the Iron Curtain.
>
> Industry can take care of its own affairs as shown by the greater number of companies, not only exhibiting at the trade fairs but also visiting Iron Curtain countries regularly throughout the year and obtaining business.

Another view, in rather blunter language, was put by Mr. John Brimacombe last August when he resigned from Notley Advertising, Ltd., where he had been in charge of the East German account. He did so, he said, in protest against "the activities of M.P.s who go to East Germany to ingratiate themselves with the East

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German Government in the hope of getting contracts and agencies." (*Sunday Telegraph*, August 27.) His successor, Mr. Brian May, resigned six months later because "I found it a little tiresome to be continually concerned with where trade ends and politics begin. I decided it was time I undertook other work."

A revealing illustration, perhaps, of the difficulty they found is the history of a letter published in the *Times* on December 7, 1960, over the signature of Mr. Drayson and pleading the case of Franz Krahl, the London correspondent of *Neues Deutschland* (the official newspaper of the East German Communists), who had been refused a visa. This letter, it transpired, was largely drafted by Notley's (*Sunday Telegraph*, May 14, 1961).

Krahl's expulsion was indisputably a political issue. It is hard to see how a P.R. firm supposedly concerned solely with trade could justify this intervention. Mr. Drayson's action in signing and sending the letter seems odder. I doubt if many of its readers knew of the association between the East German Government and Notley's, or between Notley's and himself, or between him, Notley's, and Mr. Rudi Sternberg. Mr. Sternberg, as I have already said, has a major control over British trade with East Germany through his potash contract; Mr. Drayson, a director of three of his companies, at that time represented him at Notley's monthly meetings on East Germany. It would surely have been helpful had these facts been mentioned by Mr. Drayson when he wrote the letter. And with whom, I wonder, did the idea originate?

Causes & Consequences

I DO NOT know whether my researches reveal the whole or merely a fraction of current pressure group activities at Westminster. I suspect the latter and I cannot help feeling that there is a strong case for Parliament taking a fresh look at the whole subject, a look in the light of the new techniques that have developed in the post-war years; in the light, too, of changing social, economic, and political standards.

I don't think that one can exclude the question of Members' pay from any discussion of the causes. As long as we insist on running Parliament on the cheap, pretending that it is a part-time job and basing salaries on the assumption that they will be supplemented elsewhere, there is bound to be a risk of Members being driven to accept outside appointments as advisers or consultants to pressure groups.

Again, if M.P.s are expected to be well informed about events abroad, should not more adequate provision be made for this under official auspices? Or possibly through a limited travel allowance?

But important as these two elements are, they do not go to the root of the problem—at least as far as ordinary, domestic, commercial pressure groups are concerned. I think one must first ask why perfectly reputable firms also seem to find it necessary to resort to devices such as retaining M.P.s or acting indirectly through P.R. consultants. The most important single reason lies, I believe, in the difficulty they have, or believe they have, in ensuring that their views and interests are understood by the House and the Government. Parliament is becoming ever more closely involved in issues affecting the interests of firms and industries. Yet how are they to be sure their side of the case is at least heard? They can send circulars but that has a very limited impact; they can make representations through a constituency Member but its effectiveness depends on the Member having time, enthusiasm, and interest. And there are bound to be many cases where even the most conscientious Member cannot put a case as expertly as a professional advocate would do.

This must, I think, be particularly true of the newer or highly technical industries. One has only to contrast the pool of knowledge naturally and instinctively available to argue, say, the case for agriculture, the mineworkers, the City of London, or some of the traditional industries, with the appalling paucity of knowledge about science and technology.

Earlier, I criticised the effort of an American chemical company to secure professional representation. But one must also appreciate their desire to be well informed about the political background of the Minister of Health's campaign and to ensure that their case is understood. The same is true of minicabs.

The decision to set up the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries was primarily designed to strengthen Parliament's ability to supervise these industries, but the reports—and particularly the evidence given by officials to the committees—have also helped to educate the House about the industries' problems. The vexed issue, for example, of unremunerative

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services operated by B.E.A. and British Railways has come to be understood almost wholly as a result of committees' reports.

I wonder if there is not a case for an extension of this system to include industries and interests which although not publicly owned are being affected by public policy? Those concerned could argue their case before a representative committee and at least know that it had been fully heard in an atmosphere reasonably free of emotion and prejudice. This would be a development, perhaps, of the American Congressional Committee system. It would not, of course, eliminate pressure group activities altogether—the East German exercise or the Commercial Television campaign, for example. But it would surely help to limit them by meeting the very real need many clearly feel for having their views better understood at Westminster. It would also, one hopes, lead to a better informed House of Commons.

One must also, I think, ask whether the laws covering expenditure for political purposes are adequate. In the 19th century Parliament successfully curbed the ability of the individual to win political favour at election time by the power of the purse. To-day pressure comes between elections and from organisations which have large financial resources and modern techniques of persuasion at their disposal. It is not easy to draw the line without interfering with genuine rights—the right, for example, of industries to fight the threat of nationalisation or to campaign for their own interests. But is the public not, at least, entitled to know who is doing the spending and who is receiving it by compelling interests to declare all expenditure for political purposes? There can be no justifiable objection to openness about either, and it would certainly help to curb abuses. The truth, I think, is that the Parliamentary machine has not yet been fully adapted to the ever-widening range of responsibilities that Parliament has taken on itself since the war: and in this lie some, at least, of the causes of the troubles I have been discussing.

Today

There is no denying it;
It is like mist, gas,
Like what I imagine
To be acute sense of sin.

I had forgotten,
The mind like a fox,
Hands wet, and the fluttering
Walk over timbers grown rotten.

Perhaps when I might,
Out of compassion or reality
Of context, I hadn't ever
Known it. But never

Could I forget
This sensation of no escape,
Quite different from the old
Wartime prickling at the nape.

This is the hunted man's
Feeling, at bay
With the walls closing in.
The whole future simply today.

Alan Ross

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Heinrich Böll

Something Will Be Done

AMONG THE MOST remarkable periods of my life is that which I spent as an employee in Alfred Wunsiedel's factory. By nature I am more inclined to meditation and inactivity than to work, but from time to time persistent financial difficulties compel me—since meditation earns one as little as inactivity—to take what is known as a job. Having sunk once more to this depth, I applied to the labour-exchange, and was sent with seven companions in misfortune to Wunsiedel's factory, where we were supposed to take an aptitude test.

The very sight of the factory made me distrustful: the factory was built entirely of glass bricks, and my aversion to well-lighted buildings and well-lighted rooms is as strong as my aversion to work. I became still more distrustful when breakfast was at once served in the bright, cheerfully decorated canteen: pretty waitresses brought us eggs, coffee, and toast; orange juice stood in elegant jugs: goldfish pressed their blasé faces against the sides of pale green aquaria. The waitresses were so cheerful that they seemed almost bursting with cheerfulness. Only sheer strength of will—so it seemed to me—prevented them from singing all the time. They were as full of unsung songs as some hens are full of unlaid eggs.

I realised at once what my companions in misfortune did not seem to suspect: that this breakfast was part of the test as well; so I resigned myself to chewing away with the complete conviction of a man who well knows that he is provisioning his body with valuable substance. I did something which nothing in this world could normally make me do: I drank orange juice on an empty stomach, left the coffee and an egg, and most of the toast, stood up and paced up and down ready for action.

So I was the first to be led into the test room, where the questionnaires lay ready on charming tables. The walls were a shade of green which would have conjured the word "enchanting" to the lips of interior decoration fanatics. There was no one to be seen, but I was sure I was being observed, and behaved as the man who is bursting with action behaves, when he thinks he is unobserved: impatiently I snatched my pen out of my pocket, unscrewed it, sat down at the second-best table and pulled the questionnaire towards me like an irascible customer snatching up the bill in a restaurant.

FIRST QUESTION: *Do you think it right that man has only two arms, two legs, eyes and ears?*

Here for the first time I reaped the fruits of my meditation and unhesitatingly wrote down: Even four arms, legs, eyes and ears would not satisfy my urge for action. The provision of human limbs is painfully limited.

SECOND QUESTION: *How many telephones can you use at once?*

Here too, answering was as easy as solving an elementary equation. If there are only seven telephones, I wrote, I get impatient; I only feel my abilities completely utilised with nine.

THIRD QUESTION: *What do you do with your leisure?*

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My answer: I no longer recognise the word leisure—on my fifteenth birthday I crossed it out of my vocabulary, for in the beginning was the deed.

I GOT THE JOB. As a matter of fact I did not feel completely employed even with nine telephones. I would shout into the mouthpieces at the listeners "Act at once!" or "Do something!"—"Something must happen—Something must be done—Something will be done—Something has been done—Something should be done." But mostly, since it seemed appropriate to the atmosphere of the factory, I used the imperative.

The lunch-hours were interesting: we used to eat vitamin-rich foods in the canteen, surrounded by soundless cheerfulness. Wunsiedel's factory was swarming with people who had a compulsion to relate their life-history, just as forceful business personalities love to. Their life-history is more important to them than their life, one only has to press a certain button and at once they really burst out with it.

Wunsiedel's deputy was a man by the name of Broschek, who had earned himself a certain amount of fame by supporting a lame widow and seven children through working at night while a student, simultaneously running four business agencies successfully, and even so had managed to gain a distinction in two government examinations, all within two years. When reporters asked him "When do you sleep then, Broschek?" he replied "Sleep is sin!"

Wunsiedel's secretary had supported a lame man and four children by knitting, at the same time graduating in Psychology and Local Geography, had bred sheepdogs, and become famous as a cabaret singer under the name of *"Vamp 7"*.

Wunsiedel himself was one of those people who, in the morning, when they have hardly woken up yet, are already resolved to act. "I must act," they think as they energetically knot the cords of their dressing-gowns. "I must act," they think as they are shaving, and they look triumphantly at the hair which they wash out of their razors together with the lather: these remains of facial growth are the first offering to their urge for action. And even the more private functions produce gratification for these people: water rushes away, paper is used. Something has been done. Bread is eaten, the top of an egg is cut off.

The most inconsequential action seemed a vital transaction, when it was performed by Wunsiedel: the way he put his hat on, the way he buttoned his coat, quivering with energy, the kiss he gave his wife, all was Action.

When he entered his office, he would greet his secretary with: "Something must be done!" And she would joyfully reply "Something will be done!" Wunsiedel would then go from department to department, with his cheerful "Something must be done!" Everyone would reply "Something will be done!": and I too would say to him when he came into my room: "Something will be done!"

In the first week I increased the number of telephones I used to eleven, in the second week to thirteen, and I amused myself in the tram every morning by finding new imperatives, or by putting the verbs "To be done," and "To happen" through the conjugation of the various tenses and persons, subjunctive and indicative; for two whole days I used only the sentence "Something should have been done" because I found it so attractive, for a further two days only "That ought not to have happened."

SO I WAS BEGINNING to feel properly employed—when something really happened. One Thursday morning—I had not really settled down yet—Wunsiedel rushed into my office and called out his "Something must be done!" But something inexplicable in his face made me hesitate in replying, cheerfully and heartily, as prescribed, "Something will be done!" Indeed I hesitated too long, because Wunsiedel, who very seldom shouted, bellowed at me "Answer! Answer me as it is prescribed you must answer!" And I answered as quietly

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and reluctantly as a child who is compelled to say "I am a naughty child." I brought out the sentence "Something will happen" only with a great effort, and hardly had I pronounced it than something did in fact happen. Wunsiedel fell to the floor, rolling as he fell on to his side, and lay diagonally in front of the open door. I realised at once what I confirmed as I slowly went round my desk towards the prone figure: that he was dead.

Shaking my head I stepped out over Wunsiedel, went slowly along the corridor to Broschek's office, and went in without knocking. Broschek was sitting at his desk, with a telephone in either hand and a ballpoint in his mouth, with which he was making notes on a pad, while with his bare feet he was operating a knitting machine under his desk. In this way he helps to replenish his family's clothing.

"Something has happened," I said quietly.

Broschek spat out the ballpen, put down the two phones, hesitantly released his toes from the knitting machine.

"What *has* happened, then?" he asked.

"Mr. Wunsiedel is dead," I said.

"No," said Broschek.

"But he is," I said, "come and see."

"No," said Broschek. "That's impossible," but he slid on his slippers and followed me along the passage.

"No," he said, as we stood beside Wunsiedel's corpse, "no, no!"

I did not contradict him. I carefully turned Wunsiedel on his back, shut his eyes, and thoughtfully considered him.

I felt almost fondness for him, and it became clear to me for the first time that I had never hated him. On his face was an expression such as one sees on the faces of children who obstinately refuse to give up their belief in Santa Claus, although the arguments of their playmates sound so convincing.

"No," said Broschek, "no."

"Something must be done," I said quietly to Broschek.

"Yes," said Broschek, "something must be done."

Something was done. Wunsiedel was buried, and I was chosen to carry a wreath of artificial roses behind his coffin, since I am not only endowed with a penchant for meditation and inactivity, but also with a figure and a face which are remarkably appropriate to the wearing of black suits. Evidently I looked magnificent as I followed Wunsiedel's coffin with the wreath of artificial roses in my hand. I received the offer of a position as professional mourner with a fashionable firm of undertakers.

"You are a born mourner," said the director of the firm, "the clothes are provided. Your face—simply magnificent!"

I gave in my notice to Broschek, giving as my reason that I did not feel properly employed there, that in spite of the thirteen telephones some of my abilities lay fallow. After my first professional funeral I knew at once: here you belong, this is the job that was made for you.

MEDITATIVELY I stand behind the bier in the memorial chapel, with a simple bouquet in my hand, while Handel's *Largo* is played, a piece of music to which far too little attention is paid. The Cemetery Café is my regular haunt, where I spend the time between my professional appearances, but I also often follow coffins to which I have not been assigned, buy a bunch of flowers out of my own pocket, and accompany the welfare official behind the coffin of some refugee. From time to time I also visit Wunsiedel's grave, for in the end I owe it to him that I discovered my proper calling, a calling in which meditation is precisely what is required, and in which it is my duty to be inactive.

It only occurred to me long afterwards that I have never been interested in the article produced in Wunsiedel's factory. It was in fact soap.

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Raymond Aron

The General and the Tragedy

Letter from Paris

IN EVERY FRENCHMAN the Evian agreements have roused contradictory feelings. How can one rejoice in a peace which in itself confirms the uselessness of seven long years of war? How can one wonder at the political victory gained by the Algerian nationalists, since the legitimacy of their cause had already been recognised by the proclamation of the right to self-determination? How can one unreservedly acclaim General de Gaulle when it is remembered that his own party dubbed as traitors those who supported the settlement which has now been reached? Yet how is it possible not to feel grateful to him for having finally achieved direct agreement with Algerian nationalism, if one is convinced as I am that this solution, however painful it may be on certain points, is the least harmful one?

To someone who can neither accept nor reject it unconditionally, it is no easy task to sum up Gaullism between 1958 and 1962. (Should it be called Gaullism No. 2, forgetting the post-war period of his R.P.F., or Gaullism No. 3, forgetting that the first phase, 1940–1946, included two periods, one of mid-war exile and the other of the Liberation Government?) Readers who may have been following my articles on the Fifth Republic will be familiar with the reluctance of my judgments. The need to put an end to war in Algeria seemed to me the only justification for the system of paternalistic monarchy introduced under cover of the 1958 constitution. And to my mind, direct negotiation with the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic (GPRA) was our only chance of achieving this, the formula of self-determination having no other purpose but to camouflage the predetermination of Algeria's fate, actually settled by the agreement between the French Government and the GPRA. At the time when Gaullist conceit seemed about to preclude negotiations, exasperation outweighed hope. With the January 1961 referendum, hope rose again only to give way once more to exasperation last summer, after the absurd Bizerta episode.

It would surely be amiss for me not to pay homage to the man who, convinced that disengagement would best serve the interests and vocation of France, has risked both his life and his reputation in order to achieve complete *décolonisation* (until recently called "abandon" by his own supporters). But, if this tribute is obligatory, our reservations and questions will not spring from spite or a desire to disparage, as has been suggested by the "unconditionalists." A Florentine mode of government in the twentieth century has its difficulties. It is all too easy to accuse a man of action of having paid too high a price for success; it would be even easier to minimise the effects of cunning and deceit.

It must be noted—for it is a fact—that de Gaulle's supporters furiously opposed *décolonisation* as long as it was not the work of their *chef*. And it must be added that this dishonesty, both intellectual and moral, was not perhaps against the national interest if it is true that only a General de Gaulle could overcome the *Pieds-Noirs* resistance, that only he could have a General who was defending *Algérie française* condemned to death. And even he could not bring the judges chosen by himself to condemn to death the chief of the O.A.S.

Of the Evian agreements, I think it fair to say that, *on paper*, they are as satisfactory as could

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be expected. They would probably not have been much different had they been concluded earlier (but the actual situation itself would have been different). For the F.L.N. would never have negotiated had they not had a chance of total independence, or sovereignty over the Sahara, and the prospect of a policy of neutrality between the power-blocks. So, in the main, the GPRA obtained and the French Government granted what the Algerian Nationalists had been fighting for. But, within the framework of claims made by the Algerian rebels, the French negotiators have introduced as many guarantees as possible for Algeria's European minority and for French interests: intermediate period before the self-determination vote, presence of the French army for another three years, a fifteen-year lease of Mers-El-Kebir, provisional maintenance of military bases in the Sahara, the status of the French within independent Algeria, modalities of technical, financial and cultural cooperation on all these points. It seems to me that the agreements, whether they seem adequate or not to observers, are better than most people imagined likely.[1]

IT WOULD CERTAINLY be ill-advised to take it for granted that these agreements will be honoured. The French negotiators were in a paradoxical situation since they demanded from the Algerian negotiators, whom they did not recognise as representing an Algerian State (legally it does not yet exist) promises which would bind the State destined to emerge from the self-determination vote. This difficulty has been neatly solved: by voting for independence within the association, the Algerian people will ratify the agreements, which for the time being are only declarations. Once the contents of the agreements have been approved by the people, the future Algerian State will be bound by texts signed by the "provisional" delegates.

This procedure—the only possible one in the circumstances—is not without some danger. It is conceivable that an Algerian government might question some of the clauses, alleging that their hand had been forced. The Algerian people of course had to ratify the agreements as a whole insofar as they wanted both independence and association, but the future government elected by the Algerian people may well decide that, on such and such a point, the GPRA delegates went beyond what they themselves think acceptable. But whichever procedure had been adopted, tomorrow's government might still have argued that the provisional government had exceeded its rights. Juridically speaking, the ratification of the agreements by a vote of self-determination was, from France's point of view, the best possible solution.

"Anyway the agreements won't be respected: remember the agreements signed with Tunisia, which Bourguiba's government tore up even before the ink was dry."

This objection which one hears everywhere ignores one essential difference: the agreements on internal autonomy, started by MM. Mendes-France and Christian Fouchet, signed and ratified under M. Edgar Faure's government, were doomed from the start because they aimed to put a premature end to a process of evolution which everyone, deep down, knew to be irresistible. Internal autonomy was shortly to lead to independence. Then the clauses of the agreement, so painstakingly devised, became obsolete and remained only as a witness to political futility. The lesson has been learnt at last. Instead of trying to protect themselves against what must happen (as did the 1954–55 negotiators), the 1961–62 negotiators have admitted from the start that there would eventually be a fully independent Algerian State, and they have tried to bind this future State from this moment. Obviously success cannot be certain in advance, but then neither can failure, whilst the failure of the 1955 Franco-Tunisian conventions was a certainty from the start.

THERE IS NO POINT in speculating at the present moment on the chances of Franco-Algerian association. What is surprising is, not that the future is uncertain, but that the association is not irrevocably doomed. Think of it: during the past seven years, hundreds of thousands of Algerians have died—horrible crimes have been committed on both sides—the youth of Algeria has never known anything but war. The nationalist movement has pointed to French colonialism as the arch-enemy. And yet now the leaders of this suffering yet near-triumphant revolution have agreed to put on paper, in detail, the terms of future co-operation between

[1] Many of my countrymen will disagree with this proposition. They assert that after independence (July 1) the French army will be unable to intervene and the European minority helpless and threatened. But, for many reasons, any federal settlement, of the Lebanese or Cyprus type, was excluded. The GPRA would have refused it in 1962. Perhaps it would have been possible in 1934 or 1955.

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independent Algeria and France. Does not the very fact of negotiations and agreements justify hope?

To this, it is true, will be answered: the Algerian Nationalists could have held out, but they could not have won. In military terms, their forces were weak compared to what they were in 1957. The bulk of GPRA's army was stationed in Tunisia and Morocco, unable to get past the defences in large numbers without incurring considerable losses. The French army's control over the territory may have been less complete than was implied in speeches and communiqués. In any case the Algerian rebels were further than ever from another "Dien Bien Phu." In Peking, the GPRA had found lavish encouragement; in Moscow too (though to a lesser extent). But none of the Communist powers was very keen to get involved to the extent of sending "volunteers" to the Algerian war. In order to get past the French army's defences, it would need fairly large forces which neither the Russians nor the Chinese were in a position to transport and maintain in Tunisia and Morocco, unless they were determined to provoke a Korean war in the Mediterranean area (which, to the Soviet block, was strategically highly unfavourable).

The GPRA could rely neither on massive intervention by the Communist States, nor on a ministerial crisis or a collapse of régime in France, nor again on pressure from the Western States upon France. Since the armed section had not been wiped out, and since it had itself been recognised by a large part of the *tiers monde*, the GPRA had virtually won, yet it could only give its victory reality by negotiating with the French Government. The conditions necessary to negotiation had all been present for at least a year—if only General de Gaulle had managed to convince himself that self-determination must come through pre-determination, that is through direct agreement with the F.L.N. It is quite possible that, by another ruse of history, the O.A.S. may have caused the last commotion necessary to trigger off the mechanism of peace.

THERE IS no doubt as to the fact itself, though it is full of dismal irony; the O.A.S. is paralysing the application of the Evian agreements, yet it most certainly helped to bring them about. The GPRA delegates could no longer doubt General de Gaulle's determination to complete the process of disengagement *so oder so*. Now at the same time the O.A.S., only half-heartedly fought by the authorities as long as the cease-fire was not signed, was exerting its ever-increasing authority in the towns, particularly in Algiers and Oran. Other than an agreement with the French Government, even if the main bulk of the French army were to be brought back to the mainland, the GPRA had no means at all of taking Algeria in hand; partition or congolisation were the only prospects. Indeed the GPRA was obliged to make concessions on the most sensitive points (military bases, guarantees for the Europeans) in order to strengthen General de Gaulle himself in his fight against those who were becoming the common enemy of the F.L.N. and the French Government: the last champions of *Algérie française*, the O.A.S.

A great many people aver that the O.A.S.'s ambition was and still is to be recognised as a valid negotiating body (others think the French Government's refusal to negotiate with French Algerian delegates before signing the Evian agreements was a major mistake). In fact, at Evian, the O.A.S. was indeed a body to be reckoned with: *le troisieme homme*, preventing M. Joxe from making some concessions, imposing others on M. Belkacem Krim. But it was the absentee member in whose mouth words are put which are the exact opposite of what would be said if he were actually present. An O.A.S. spokesman would have urged to the French negotiators the impossibility of agreement with an enemy fought for seven years, and to the Algerian negotiators the necessity of an agreement with representatives of the French Algerians, not with the representatives of a power which was quite unable to exact obedience in Algeria. Both pleas would have proved fruitless. As they were both threatened, the powers of Paris and Tunis found an ultimate reason for agreement. Logically, cynically, silently, a change of fronts took place. The pursuit of "pacification" in Algeria against the F.L.N. had been in vain. It was with and for the F.L.N., against the champions of French Algeria, against those who had brought de Gaulle himself back to power that the new Algeria was to be built and, first and foremost, peace to be restored there if possible.

GENERAL DE GAULLE sets much store by legitimacy: but he gained power in 1940 thanks to a rebellion against a legal government,

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and in 1958 again thanks to a military rebellion in which his friends if not he himself played an active part. General de Gaulle dreams of *l'unité nationale* and frequently calls upon *la nation rassemblée*: yet he has twice presided over a civil war. Twice under his reign, generals, admirals, and senior officials have been dragged before a tribunal and sometimes condemned to death, once for having obeyed Marshal Pétain, the other time for having disobeyed General de Gaulle. A unique and tragic destiny in which France's own tragedy is reflected. To-day few observers doubt that he was right during the war to keep France beside her allies against the opinion of most French officers. I am also convinced that he is right to see *décolonisation* through to its end, although we are still far from unanimity, even among Frenchmen *de bonne volonté*. But whether we consider the 1940–44 or the 1958–62 period, it would be difficult to avoid this question: has not General de Gaulle, by his words, by his actions and his style, made the inevitable upheavals more serious than they need have been?

General de Gaulle traces his legitimacy back to the act of the 18th of June, 1940. Yet even at the most intense stage of the *épuration*, Marshal Pétain's judges refused to bring the armistice as a charge against him. It has not been proved that in mid-June 1940 any other decision was still possible. It has not been proved that North-Africa had the means to fight on. But we now know that the armistice, on a purely military plane, made it possible to save what was most essential and to leave a future open. We know that, whatever motives its signatories may have had, the armistice, whether or not it was a mistake, was not to split the French into two factions: the resistance and the traitors. Had he followed a different line of policy and spoken in a different way, General de Gaulle might not have caused so much hatred nor left so much bitterness in the hearts of a minority.

The first de Gaulle wanted to preserve the national heritage and the empire built up by the Third Republic. The second de Gaulle (if his present declarations are to be believed) knew as early as 1944 that the wind of history was blowing towards the liberation of the colonial peoples. (This did not prevent the same General de Gaulle from declaring to His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador that he was sorry not to have the means of going to war with England who had "failed" France in Syria.) I personally have little doubt that General de Gaulle is telling the truth, for he seems gifted with a kind of historical foresight. As he looked far into the future he must have foreseen, as early as 1945, that the protectorates and the colonies would reach a status of autonomy or even of independence and association. But if we grant the President of the Republic this infallible vision, then we must also consider him a consummate master of dissimulation. Should we look again at the texts and speeches on Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco in the days of the R.P.F. (between 1947 and 1950) we would find it difficult to see any signs of this perspicacity. Just before the April 1962 referendum, after the Evian agreements, General de Gaulle was still talking about the "abandons" of the Fourth Republic—he who despite so many declarations had just made the GPRA independent Algeria's future government.

WHEN IN FACT did General de Gaulle become convinced that his views as a philosopher must determine his actions as a statesman? What were his views on Algeria in 1958, when Michel Debré condoned in advance the rebellion in favour of *Algérie française*? No one can tell with any certainty. He may only have known the direction and the end for certain, and not the stages of the evolution. Personally I rather think he may have deluded himself as to the consequences of his return to power. He probably never subscribed to the ideas of the supporters of *"intégration."* He did not disown Michel Debré or Jacques Soustelle; neither did he disown those among his visitors who, coming back from Colombey, vouched for his liberal intentions. Despite the June 1959 speeches he already saw Algeria evolving towards statehood. But he apparently needed more than three years to recognise that peace could only be reached through political negotiations with the GPRA. "Peace of the braves" (*Paix des braves*), "put the knives away (*couteaux aux vestiaires*), both formulae were dictated by the same wish: let the rebels stop fighting and then France in her generosity will not hesitate to satisfy their legitimate claims. It is obvious that the rebels on their side wanted to conquer, not to receive—just as de Gaulle meant to grant, not to negotiate. The last word belonged to the rebels in substance, to de Gaulle in form. Algeria's fate will be decided by the Algerian people's vote and, from now until the self-determination vote, France will continue to rule Algeria. But the vote can only ratify the agreements reached by

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the French and Algerian negotiators (unless those agreements are ignored). In fact this agreement has given independence to Algeria, and Algeria to the GPRA (if it remains united). The General has finally granted what he had always sworn he would never grant. He has virtually recognised the GPRA, but on the other hand the GPRA has promised co-operation with France—a co-operation which, materially, serves Algeria's interests, but one not entirely compatible with the nationalists' revolutionary plan.

Such was the process which led from the *rébellion des dupes* of May, 1958, to the triumphal referendum of April, 1962: General de Gaulle remains thus exposed to criticism from the liberals, the *ultras*, and the former *ultras*. Was it necessary to prolong "pacification" for three-and-a-half years before coming at last to the indispensable and inevitable political negotiations? Was it necessary to break up the first Evian negotiations because of the Sahara, and then suddenly proclaim, during a press conference, that no Algerian government would ever give up its sovereignty over the sands and petrol? Was it necessary to encourage Michel Debré's philippics from 1955 to 1958 if disengagement serves the higher interests of the country?

And the spokesmen of the army and of the *"pieds-noirs"* are also asking questions, making accusations. Why his visits to the barracks? Why not frankly inform the officers of the aims and direction of a policy which would have been less inacceptable if honestly explained? Why were the officers allowed solemnly to commit themselves to the people if it was already decided that they would not be allowed to keep their word? The *"pied-noirs,"* as well as a large number of officers, would in any case have hated the policy of independence. But the way this policy has been carried out added trickery to desertion. From the *"Je vous ai compris"* to the April, 1962, referendum, some true believers see only one unwavering line—*sancta simplicitas*! To the French Algerians and the Army officers, it is a trail of damnable changes of policy and cynical tricks. They are right, but they forget what is essential.

I MYSELF have at one time or another subscribed to one or other of these accusations. But they are irrefutable only as long as the Prince remains tangled in his own nets. From the day he frees himself he has an argument which, if not decisive, is at least irrefutable: the road may have been long, it has still led me to my destination. Would I have succeeded had I taken a shorter route? No one will dare give a categorically affirmative answer.

Let me be clear about this. I still feel that General de Gaulle could and should have avoided supporting the ravings of the *Courrier de la Colère* before 1958; I still feel he could probably have shortened the delay between the "peace of the brave" and the peace itself; I still feel that he would probably have excited less hate if he had been more open. I still feel all this, but I am not *certain* about it all. The civil war which has replaced the war between France and the Algerian Nationalists is horrible indeed. But if Algerian independence after an agreement between the power in Paris and the GPRA was the only possible way out, can I charge it to the Prince's account, and hold him liable for what may well have been the unavoidable price to pay for a solution?

No one can justify the failure of Machiavellianism. Successful Machiavellianism has the strength of a man invoking reality against adversaries evoking only possibilities.

But has he succeeded?

SUCCESS AND FAILURE can only be measured by reference to the participants' aims. If the aim of General de Gaulle or Michel Debré was to keep Algeria within the Republic, the failure is evident. But it would be rather absurd to credit General de Gaulle with such an aim. I think it fair to sum up the task General de Gaulle had set himself in May, 1958, in these terms: to put an end to war in Algeria without causing an irrevocable breach of national unity, and without losing all chances of French influence in Africa; to take advantage of the Algerian crisis to renovate the institutions and to create a strong, true State; and finally to restore to France *la grandeur*, that is to say one of the foremost places on the historical scene. If this is the task, the Gaullist Republic is only just beginning, since it has only just won its first indisputable victory on the road towards its first objective.

The Evian agreements and the cease-fire have been successful, and this is the *sine qua non* of everything else. But they do not as yet represent *success*. As I write this, there can be no doubt that the O.A.S. have lost the game. They will not prevent Algeria's accession to independence any more than they will impose a government

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upon France. But even if the O.A.S. has lost it does not mean that General de Gaulle and France have won. The O.A.S. is still strong enough in Algiers and Oran to enforce a kind of blockade of the Muslim quarters and to carry out a few dozen criminal attacks every day. Meanwhile, strengthened by Moslems deserting the French contingents and by the rallying of the *harkis*, the Algerian force is taking advantage of the withdrawal of the French troops to move about freely and occupy the field, and to become in effect the real power. Nowhere, either in towns or in the *bled*, do the provisional executive authority or the police hold the real power. No one can say how long it will be and how many lives will be lost before the O.A.S. is finally eliminated. Now the repercussions in France of Algeria's independence will be different, just as the Algeria of tomorrow will be different, dependent upon the length and cost of the fight against the O.A.S. Let me be explicit: the O.A.S. is well on the way to ruining France's last chances in Algeria, by forcing the European population to leave the country or by making partition once more the order of the day. Is it once again to provoke what it cannot prevent? I am not sure that today the O.A.S. does not consciously hope for the worst. The *ultras* have said again and again that independent Algeria and agreement with the F.L.N. spelt complete catastrophe to the Europeans. Yet they are passionately trying to ensure the fulfilment of their prophecies. Alas, they have a good chance of bringing it off.

IN ANY CASE co-existence would appear difficult between a European population of a little over a million and a ten-million-strong Islamic population within the framework of a revolutionary party. The agreements on association will only be applied insofar as the government of independent Algeria, without giving up the idea of reforms or even of radical changes, allows a sector of liberal Western society to subsist. The number of Algerian workers in France, the disaster implied for Algeria in the sudden return of 300,000 workers and the sudden departure of the European minority, more than any judicial guarantee should constitute the "guarantee of guarantees." The Arabism inspiring one fraction of the F.L.N. (Ben Bella), the revolutionary passion stirring the youth of Algeria, the length and horror of the war do not forbid all hopes of a progressive movement back to a peace of association. But neither do they permit us to count on an outcome which, after the events of 1958–62, would be little short of a miracle. Nothing constructive could be done before the cease-fire; but the cease-fire alone does not settle anything. The Irish started fighting among themselves once their leaders had accepted a compromise with England. Now the French are fighting among themselves because their leaders have accepted Algeria's independence. Within the GPRA, the various tendencies are already in opposition.

Association will never become a reality unless both parties can maintain the firmness and authority which made the Evian agreements possible. On the French side, the firmness is intact, but the authority is questioned. F.L.N.'s authority over the masses has been demonstrated to the point of heroism, but one wonders whether the GPRA's firmness will remain unanimous.

THERE IS EVEN more uncertainty concerning General de Gaulle's second objective. France has indeed shown since 1958 a phase of political stability in that the President of the Republic, in whose hands the real power is, has remained at his post and has only once changed his Prime Minister. On the other hand the régime has been threatened by a near-rebellion of the army in 1960, by an actual rebellion of the generals in April, 1961, and is still being challenged by the O.A.S. Furthermore, the régime functions in a fundamentally different way from that intended by the Constitution, and the President himself takes great liberties with its text as well as with the recommendations of the Council of State. A régime based upon one man, a Prince who scorns the Law he has himself established, are hardly likely to ensure the future of a country.

The replacement of M. Michel Debré by M. Pompidou is a further stage in the degradation of the Prime Minister's function. M. Pompidou is a perfectly honourable man whom I hold in high esteem. To my mind, however, the President's choice is unfortunate. *Un favori* officially becomes Prime Minister. Yet all the ministries in which General de Gaulle is specially interested are still run by "unconditionalists."

What is de Gaulle's purpose? The election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage would not herald a presidential system of the American kind, but a "presidentialist"

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régime making future trouble certain. When a President is elected by universal suffrage, he should not have the right to dissolve parliament as well; otherwise the balance of power is broken and all significance removed from the theoretical ministerial responsibility to the Assembly.

Is it the task of Pompidou's government to convince the House that they should vote for constitutional reform in order to avoid a revision by referendum (which would be little in keeping with the text of the Constitution)? Or is it to prolong the duration of the present Assembly if the situation is less favourable next year? It is true that we know now how General de Gaulle likes to govern: in an absolutist style, limited and liberal. It is less easy to know which style he thinks best suited to the long-term needs of France. In April, 1962, everything indicated that Michel Debré was thinking of Gaullism's future (eventually minus de Gaulle) and the President rather more of General de Gaulle's future (eventually minus the Gaullists).

As to foreign policy, three elements are clearly apparent: the striking force, the European entente, and hostility towards American leadership. These elements are closely linked in General de Gaulle's mind, if not yet on the world scene.

In his *Carnets*, Léon Halévy once recorded a conversation between Napoléon III and Prévost-Paradol, who had just accepted the post of French Ambassador in Washington. "It is impossible," the Emperor said, "to wean this country from her habit of questioning the principle of government."

"Well, Sire, there are three or four governments waiting at the frontiers of France hat in hand, for the major blunder which will let them in." At this (as Halévy reports) the Emperor laughed.

We have no governments waiting at the frontiers of France; even the sole Pretender is in the country, offering tokens of his loyalty to the Republic and even more to its President. But the dispute on the "principle of government" has been replaced by the dispute on the reform of the Constitution. The 1958 constitution has not as yet been applied, and the only problem is to find out how to replace it. "A government having the same duration as the parliament" (Maurice Duverger), an authentic "Presidential régime" (Georges Vedel), "election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage" (Charles de Gaulle), here we are again as in 1869 with three governments, three doctrines of constitutional reform more or less clearly attached to parties or people. Michel Debré remains alone or almost alone with his doctrine of "a parliamentary empire," that is to say the real application of the 1958 constitution.

The régime under which we are living has preserved a democratic façade and a liberal content. If the individual freedoms seem endangered at times, if arbitrary arrests and administrative detentions are growing more numerous, the responsibility does not lie with de Gaulle or the Gaullists but with the underground O.A.S. movement. Subversion invites repression. It is impossible to fight subversive action without betraying some of the obligations inherent in what we understood to be the reign of law and order.

I am personally without sympathy for the omnipotence of one man, even when that Prince has the dignity of the President of the Republic. In the long run, it is bad for a nation to trust one man and to answer *oui* year after year to questions so posed that a *non* is practically impossible. There is much talk of a modern democracy adapted to an industrial society. The reality rather recalls *la démocratie plébiscitaire*: "The nature of democracy is to personify itself in one man" (Napoléon III).

I am not sure either that I agree with a Gaullist diplomacy full of vast ambitions and ambiguities. To wish at one and the same time to say *non* to the United States and to gather Europe round France is bound to lead to a dead-end. Our European partners, including the Germany of Adenauer, agree to the European part of the French programme as long as it does not appear to be a means of opposing the United States or a stage on the road to separation of the old world and the new. Furthermore I suspect that the nationalistic tone and manner of the Fifth Republic may soon find disciples in West Germany and in Italy.

On the other hand, this Gaullist Republic must be credited with having restored the financial situation, stabilised the currency, and made numerous if partial attempts at administrative reform. I dislike the way in which the Prince changes his Grand Vizier without apparent reason; I dislike the fact that a bank manager

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owes his promotion to the position of Prime Minister to the Prince's favour. But the retiring Grand Vizier has worked hard. If a rumour should spread that he has lost the Sovereign's good graces he might even become popular (which would displease him far less than he says). Replacement teams may exist, but some of them lull their impatience by not refusing a small share in the exercise of government.

IT MAY YET BECOME necessary to denounce the undertakings of the present power, if it indulges too freely in referendum-plebiscites and wishes to increase yet further the President's prerogatives. General de Gaulle, his confidence strengthened by peace in Algeria, may move yet further against Atlantic solidarity. As long as the empire remains liberal there is no reason to make a choice between support and opposition. The "unconditionalists" shock me: I try not to imitate them by criticising them.

ADIEU AU GAULLISM was the title of a recent article. But can one say farewell to something which in fact does not exist? There is General de Gaulle facing various situations and events which follow from the meeting between the man and history. "Unconditionalists" applaud, even when events make nonsense of their former vows. Adversaries denounce, even when the events fulfil their former hopes.

Is one "Gaullist" or "anti-Gaullist" if one resembles neither? In my pamphlet *La Tragédie Algérienne*, which roused the anger of Messrs. Soustelle, Terrenoire, and Maurice Schumann, I used the expression: *"l'heroïsme de l'abandon."* Jacques Soustelle lifted his hands in horror. Maurice Schumann reproached me gravely. And yet... The will to abandon (or if you prefer, to disengage) has been brought to the point of heroism by General de Gaulle. It would have been easier to go on with "pacification," but surely France's best interests lay in not vainly trying to hang on to the last shreds of the empire. General de Gaulle chose what appeared to him to be in the higher interests of France. The choice must have been more difficult than that of June, 1940.

Still, after seven or eight years, wouldn't the war have ended anyway? Maybe. Historically, General de Gaulle has earned—and will retain —the credit for having convinced the country that *décolonisation* meant change, not defeat. He was not the initiator of this operation and his own supporters have hampered it for a long time. Yet he brought it to its conclusion in Algeria where the risk of tragedy was high. It remains to be seen whether the tragedy has in fact been averted.

Ploughing

The north-west does not halt his stride;
Bow and stern he breasts the wind,
He rides the streaming earth and leaves behind
A greening island in a sweeping tide.

Bluff at the north-west still he goes:
Squared four-by-four; then more and more
The tide takes up the island shore,
Until the green can gleam no more.

Rex Taylor

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John Wain

Meyerstein

An Oxford Memoir

For one day in thy courts is better than a thousand.
PSALM 84

"TOWERY city and branchy between towers" —that line, which burst over me with a shock of delight one day in 1944, still sums up a good deal of the physical impression of Oxford. But when I start to think about it I always want to go on, to add a whole catalogue: marshy city and grassy between marshes; blossomy city and hard between blossoms; flowery city and grey between flowers. The physicality of Oxford is of the kind that most disturbs and incites my imagination. I have often noticed, particularly among literary and intellectual people, that the physical nature of a town can go almost unnoticed: to me, it is the most important thing. London, for instance, seems to me stifling, dead, crushing, with all those miles of bricks and mortar stretching away on every side, and the natural colours and shapes and smells of its geographical region blotted out by a uniform city-presence. That is hardly London's fault; its mere size makes something of the kind inevitable; but then its size is the most hateful thing about it. Smaller cities, that have not overlaid their physical nature, attract me immediately, but none as strongly as Oxford; sharp, challenging atmospheres, such as those of Edinburgh, Boston, Oslo, or Cambridge, stimulate me for a time, and so does the warm, accepting and yet formal quality of the cities of southern Europe; but sooner or later I find myself hankering for that rich, mould-producing, soft, crumbling, rheumatic atmosphere of the Thames Valley in general and Oxford in particular. And do not tell me that Oxford is "spoilt." I know it is spoilt, I know the whole shameful history of greed and myopia that has led to the selling of half the city and most of its surrounding country to brutal degenerates who have desecrated it for profit. But to one besotted, like myself, the desecration has become part of the general pattern, and I could not do without it—as a man crazily in love will delight even in the frowsty, sordid, dishonest and lecherous side of his woman's nature. To me, Cambridge is too intact. "I see, not feel, how beautiful it is." I am glad to have it, as a reminder of what Oxford must have been before the despoilers got to work. But to my eyes, the very fact that Oxford is doomed, that it is splitting apart under the hammer-blows of the twentieth century, makes it all the more beautiful; it adds a whole dimension—the tragic —to which Cambridge is a stranger. The lorries thundering up the High, shaking the college towers to pieces, the crowds of industrial workers bicycling to and from Cowley, the presence of thousands who are either oblivious or contemptuous of the remnants of order and beauty among which they walk—all this is woven into my total experience of Oxford, and I have no choice but to swallow it whole.

SOME OF THIS ATTITUDE, I know, derives from my first months of living in Oxford. First impressions, in such a case, are everything, and at the time of my first impression Oxford was even more heavily overlaid with things foreign to its spirit than it is to-day. The war was in its third year. The factories were blasting away in full production. The colossal build-up of American forces, in readiness for the invasions of the following year, was well in hand. Convoys of lorries whined through the blacked-out

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streets all night; G.I.s ruminated at the street-corners; the pubs were full of uniforms, and the military police of half a dozen armies patrolled everywhere. The university had not closed down to anything like the extent it did in 1914–18, but even so most of the colleges were half given over to housing bombed-out Ministries and the like, and in what remained there were very few undergraduates reading full-scale courses. Most of them, apart from the science students who were there on Government orders, were birds of passage who spent a bare couple of terms at the university and had to devote three or four days a week to military training.

Among this welter, a few dons remained, a few undergraduates read Honours courses: "Full Schools" were held every year; the machine ticked over. Naturally, those of us who were reading Arts subjects tended to seek each other out. We were a strange group; a handful of those like myself who had been rejected on medical grounds, reinforced—and, as time went on, outnumbered—by men invalided out of the services with more or less permanent disabilities. With our artificial legs, our glass eyes, our deflated lungs, our asthma, our heart-disease, we limped about, discussing Shakespeare and Milton amid the skirling of huge lorries running in four-wheel drive. It was interesting, but it was all very bad for me. It helped to strengthen and rivet in my mind the image of the threatened minority, the same that was so constantly before me in childhood. Here was I, in love with poetry and scholarship, drunk with the splendour of the word, ready at all hours of the day or night to

> *descant and yet again descant*
> *Upon the supreme theme of art and song,*

and the companions who shared my passion, who were ready to descant with me, were this tiny minority, almost unheeded in a city flooded with the tide of war, every one of whom had either been rejected or smashed before coming here. Always ready to dramatise a situation, I grew up towards my twentieth year with the old sense of doom, of being inexorably crowded out, inch by inch, from sunlight and nourishment, growing stronger with every day that passed.

PEOPLE LIVE in accordance with their mental pictures. At the very time when the world was opening out before me, I saw it as closing in. When I should have been running forward to embrace life, I was digging a fortification against it. With every reason for optimism, I became a stoical pessimist. Samuel Johnson was my favourite author, my moral hero; Boswell and *The Rambler* were constantly open on my table. Johnson reflected my mood exactly, because he put into dignified and resounding prose the sense of stoical resistance against hopeless odds. I would murmur to myself, as if they were lyric poems, sombre fragments from his lay sermons. "Life is everywhere a state in which there is much to be endured, and little to be enjoyed." "So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topics of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities." But it was not his gloom alone that made Johnson a hero to me. It was his tragic gaiety. Amid all this settled conviction of hopelessness, he was sociable, welcomed friends, revelled in talk, devoured books. All this I did too. No wonder I took over his attitudes *en bloc*; but they were the wrong attitudes. Brave, dignified, and admirable in his case, they were foolish and even cowardly in mine. When Johnson wrote the sentences that rang in my head, he was old, racked with diseases, emotionally shattered by the deaths of those he loved, with nothing ahead but a failing of powers and a death that might or might not appear as a merciful release. Such a man would make himself ridiculous and contemptible by counterfeiting youthful abandon; but it was just as absurd for me, at the age of twenty, to adopt his granite attitudes. I needed someone to tell me this, and I count it among the disasters of my life that there was nobody there to do so. My parents, and the circle I moved in at home, did not understand what was happening; I had passed out of the world of their comprehension, naturally enough, and most of what I said or did was opaque to them. As for Oxford, it just so happened that most of the older people who influenced me were themselves modern simulacra of Johnson. There was, for instance, Tom Monaghan, a dour Glaswegian, studying eighteenth-century literature at Oxford after being badly smashed up on an Army motor-cycle; a man naturally stoical, sternly critical of most of the human emotions, a pious Roman Catholic, distrusting most of what he saw in the modern world; to-day he is in a monastery. There was my next-door neighbour, E. H. W. Meyerstein, who hated Johnson and yet con-

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trived strikingly to suggest him: physical bulk, a face contorted by some kind of a stroke, uncontrollable nervous tics, hypochondria bordering on insanity, vast erudition—money could not have bought a better Johnsonian outfit. And, to cap it, my tutor was C. S. Lewis, whose attitude to life, both in great matters and small, was more Johnsonian than that of anyone I have met before or since.

All this doesn't amount to a way of saying that I did not enjoy my time at Oxford. I enjoyed it, in many ways, passionately; I was in a place I loved, spending my days immersed in great literature, and winning the approval of people I respected. But I enjoyed it, so to speak, tragically. I wasn't "happy"; I could scarcely have been, since I was in the process of constructing for myself a world-view which excluded the very idea of happiness except for the gross, the naïve, or the unreflecting. On and on I went, spinning this dangerous web, and by the age of twenty-one I was completely hidden within it. Looking back, I am appalled at my own complicated folly. And yet I can scarcely blame myself. Not only was I beyond the reach, as I have said, of any kind of helpful common-sense; it was also true that I had no opportunity of studying happiness. I didn't know anybody who was happy. All the people who surrounded me were wounded and scarred in one way or another; most of them had sombre and pessimistic ideas; and in one case, at least, unhappiness had swollen and bloated out to the point of actual madness.

THE CASE I refer to was that of E. H. W. Meyerstein, whose acquaintance I made in my third term and who was one of my closest companions for the rest of my undergraduate days. Meyerstein was such a fantastic figure that I doubt if I can make him credible to anyone who never met him: still, this being my story and he being one of the principal characters in it, I must see what I can do.

To begin with, let me fill in the public facts, so to speak, about Meyerstein. The son of a wealthy man (about whom I know nothing except that he seems to have been the caricaturist's ideal of the Edwardian Hampstead-Jewish Croesus) Edward Harry William, having duly got himself born and been equipped with three aggressively English Christian names, was launched into the pre-1914 world by way of Harrow and Magdalen. No expense was spared, and neither, if we are to believe the son's own posthumous narrative,[1] was any ordeal or humiliation. Not only was "Eddie" expected to hold his own in the harsh world of the Edwardian public school, with its Spartan discipline and its frank, overt snobberies; he had also to justify his existence in the eyes of a large, interfering family who seemed to have achieved a rare blend of Jewish inquisitiveness with British arrogance. Dreamy, solitary, a passionate student, the boy was at home among books and music, awkward and troubled anywhere else; it is easy to imagine the ideal upbringing for such a child, one that would have brought out the latent sweetness of his character and developed his gifts, which were unquestionably very fine. What he actually got was an upbringing calculated to turn him into a raging neurotic by the time he was twenty-one, which it duly did.

Meyerstein was fifty-five when I first met him, and I don't want to waste time on speculation about things that happened twenty years before I was born; but this question of his upbringing really has some importance, since it accounts for a great many features of his behaviour, tastes and attitudes which I, as a youth of eighteen, found utterly baffling. What I could see—what anyone could see, at first glance—was that this man had spent his life in a long, desperately hard struggle to make some sort of a place for himself in literature. He had studied deeply, and had the Greek and Latin classics more or less by heart, as well as a vast quantity of French and English literature; he had written hundreds of poems, publishing volume after volume at his own expense; he had translated the Elegies of Propertius, written a monumental life of Chatterton, contributed to scores of learned controversies in organs like the *Times Literary Supplement* and *Notes and Queries*; he had published immense novels, volumes of short stories, at least one play, and a mass of musical criticism in various papers. Day after day, year after year, he had guided his pen across the paper, or hammered away at one or other of his beaten-up old typewriters (that he, a rich man, should have used typewriters not only obsolete but worn-out, on which it was impossible to type a line without the letters jumping all over the paper, is a good pointer to his horror of spending money).

What I didn't realise at the time, of course,

[1] E. H. W. Meyerstein, *Of My Early Life* (London: Neville Spearman, 1958).

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was that it had all come to nothing. All I could see was that Meyerstein was a wonderfully learned man who lived in a rich confusion of books and manuscripts and was always reading and writing—just the sort of life I was hoping to lead myself—and that he had an imposing shelfful of books with his name on the spine. I don't believe I had heard, at that time, of private publication; no doubt I just thought that an author wrote a book and sent it to a publisher, and the publisher either published it or didn't. I was ready to admire anyone who had smelt printer's ink, and here was a man who had a couple of dozen books to his name. It is only when I look back that I see it all clearly—the tragic disappointment, the sense of heaving away for years at a weight too heavy to lift, the deep frost that had settled on his hopes. By this time, Meyerstein's parents were both dead; even if he were to win recognition, it would be too late now to go and confront them with the visible signs of it. That particular series of early humiliations could not be wiped out. What remained?

Well, there was Oxford; another of the great unhealed wounds in Meyerstein's soul was that he had failed to get his First, and had then worked desperately hard for a Magdalen fellowship, one of the kind that are awarded competitively, and had failed there too. The disappointment and overstrain had driven him into some kind of breakdown; he had fled from Oxford, taken rooms in Gray's Inn, and lived the life of a secluded man of letters for twenty years. When the war came, he stayed in London until his chambers were smashed up by a bomb, and then went—significantly—first to Cambridge and finally to Oxford. The decision to go to Cambridge first seems to me to point to a preliminary hesitation, a kind of screwing up of his courage, before confronting Oxford—which must, in its corporate character, have loomed up in front of him very much in the way his parents had done. Coming back to Magdalen, he had obtained permission to live in College (since he had, during all the intervening years, "kept his name on the books" or performed some similar Oxford shibboleth) and set himself once more to the hopeless task of getting Oxford to accept him. Tragic folly! Oxford has worlds to offer, but not to those who ask. Furthermore, Meyerstein was approaching Oxford by the wrong avenue—through the dons; and, as a general rule, it is true to say that the dons represent the worst side of Oxford—the excluding, sneering, ungenerous, unforgiving, parochial side. And so it came about that Meyerstein, for the second time in his life, broke his knuckles by beating them against the flinty sides of Magdalen Senior Common Room. It was no use; he made no headway with the dons; he was not admitted as a member of Common Room, and had to find his companionship in the less critical, more shifting world of the undergraduates.

IN ALL THIS, I DO NOT greatly blame the dons themselves. An Oxford college is a kind of club; if a man is elected to a fellowship, or to membership of the Common Room, those who have elected him have not only to work with him but to eat, drink, and spend many of their leisure hours in his company. And Meyerstein was not everyone's idea of an easy-going companion. He wrote to me once that at some dinner or other, where for once he had been admitted to the cabal, he had found himself sitting next to C. S. Lewis: "He was extremely boastful of his knowledge of Milton, but did not seem to know that the name Lycidas, for a soldier nearly drowned, occurs in Lucan." I think the whole tone of their conversation can be deduced from that one sentence, and my sympathies are with Lewis. After a hard day's work, you do not want to find yourself sitting next to a man who finds his chief pleasure in shooting you down over obscure points of literary scholarship. The Magdalen Common Room was protecting itself, and justifiably—though worse bores than Meyerstein, and men with none of his underlying sweetness of temperament and genuine love of art, have been tolerated for years in every Common Room in Oxford. What is harder to forgive is the general attitude towards Meyerstein that obtained among Oxford dons. Not to put too fine a point on it, they sneered at him. He was a figure of fun, for all sorts of reasons. He was a failure, and academics are, notoriously, success-worshippers; in any case, no one ever has any sympathy with a *rich* man who is a failure, whose failure, however painful, does not involve him in actual want. Again, they knew that he had vast learning, and their tidy minds were irritated by his clumsiness, his lack of control over what he knew, his inability to tie it up in neat little bundles and market it. The average don has climbed to his eminence as much by canniness as by hard work or flair; Meyerstein was not

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canny, and they despised him for it while they half-feared him for his huge random erudition. There were honourable exceptions, but in the main it has to be recorded that Oxford, to the extent that it was personified by the dons, treated Meyerstein shabbily, and that his attitude of half-crazy resentment had its crumb of justification.

However, the picture has its bright side. Exile among the undergraduates was by no means the hard fate for Meyerstein that it would have been for many another man; for, doubtless as another result of his pernicious upbringing, the slant of his emotions was distinctly homosexual. I do not say, and no one who knew him could ever say, that Meyerstein was a practising homosexual. He was simply homosexual in the way in which many schoolmasters are sadists—that is, the cast of his emotions was that way, but he managed to keep it from presenting itself to his conscious mind in any overtly sexual form. To put it bluntly. Meyerstein was completely without any sexual life, but if he had had any (which would have meant re-structuring the whole of his emotional system) it would have been of a homosexual character. Certainly he had one trait by which the pervert can usually be recognised—the hatred of women. Besides being repelled by their physiology, he was paranoid about their having designs on him. His few friendships with women usually came to an abrupt end when he took it into his head that marriage was being plotted; as, for instance, his fleeting spell of camaraderie with Dorothy L. Sayers, back in the 'twenties, which crashed in flames when someone told him that Miss Sayers, being shown over a house that was for sale, had been heard to remark, "This wouldn't do for Eddie."

I first met Meyerstein in the autumn of 1943, when I was hunting for guest speakers to come to an undergraduate club at St. John's called the Essay Society. He was living in a couple of rooms on the top floor of No. 12, Longwall Street, whose front windows looked across over Magdalen grove and whose back ones gave one of the best available views of the old City Wall. The house was desperately uncomfortable, with no bathroom and a lavatory out in the back yard, but Meyerstein was genuinely indifferent to physical comfort; he had a neurosis about getting enough to eat, which was related to his persecution mania—if he failed to keep his strength up, the hounds would overtake him and drag him down—but beyond that, his wishes were of the simplest. All he demanded of a house was that it should carry no suggestion of modernity, for the modern world had rejected him and he was its implacable enemy.

Early one afternoon in October, I climbed the stairs of No. 12 and found him sitting among his treasures. Old books, manuscripts, and pictures were everywhere; Meyerstein was famous as a collector, and he was certainly far removed from the kind of connoisseur who keeps his "items" under lock and key, or carefully tabulated behind glass. If he invited you to take a seat, you were quite likely to have to remove several hundred pounds' worth of books or manuscripts from the chair before you could get into it. (He once told me that he kept the manuscript of Wordsworth's 1807 poems, a very valuable item even for him, in a box *under his bed*.) I was enchanted: I should be staggered, even to-day, to walk into such a place; then, I felt like Aladdin. To cap it all, Meyerstein was in one of his benign, humorous moods. Except when his crazy fits of paranoia were on him, he could be very likeable; he had a childlike simplicity that was very touching. To use a term that has come into currency since those days, he had no Lifemanship. No one ever had less skill at putting up a front; he was what he was, and you saw immediately what was going on in his mind. The cause of his good humour, no doubt, was that he kept happily at work on a task that was not too demanding, and which he had reason to hope would lead him a little nearer to recognition by the scholarly world. Briefly, he had seen an item in a bookseller's catalogue which engaged his interest, written off for it, and realised, when it arrived, that he was on to something remarkable. It was the manuscript life-story of a seventeenth-century Kentish seaman, Edward Coxere (pronounced 'Coxery'), written in what was evidently the man's own hand and bound in coarse but strong parchment. Before I had been there two minutes, he was showing me the manuscript and talking animatedly about how interesting it was. I sat there, with waves of new impressions breaking over me, blinking and trying to cope with everything as it came. The manuscript seemed interesting, though not wildly so; I was unfamiliar with seventeenth-century hand, and could only make out a word here and there; still, the pictures of ships seemed

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well done, and I had the pleasant sense that someone long dead was speaking directly to me. But I was much more interested in my first impressions of Meyerstein himself. He was a big, thick-set man, dressed in the ruin of what had been a well-cut grey suit, augmented by a dark-blue jersey of which the sleeves poked out over his wrists. The first thing one noticed about him, inevitably, was that one side of his face was tightly screwed up by some kind of nervous seizure which had happened a few years previously—a pointer, I suppose, to the strokes which eventually killed him. His right eye—I think it was the right—was almost hidden, and I could never tell how much he was able to see with it. Even if the eye itself was undamaged, its usefulness must have been restricted by the fact that it could never fully open. His mouth, too, was drawn upwards on that side, which gave his speech an odd flavour: it was not that his articulation was affected, but rather that, if you watched his face while he was talking, there was something impish or gnome-like about the way the words seemed to come out obliquely. He looked, in short, like a gargoyle: not one of the hideously ugly ones, but one of those in which the grotesquerie is tempered by a satiric good humour. He was given, as we are told Shelley was, to bursts of demoniac laughter, and as he shook and rocked back and forth in one of these fits, his half-closed eye would twinkly brightly out through its tiny slit with an unimaginable impish malice and glee. However, this afternoon he was in one of his quieter moods, and his face consequently suggested that of a gargoyle in repose.

THE SECOND THING that I, at any rate, noticed was that his hands were finely shaped and that he instinctively held them in graceful attitudes. The nails were unkempt, forming an odd contrast to the slight touch of *dandysme* provided by the signet-ring on one finger, but the hands, and their poise, were unmistakeably graceful. That contrast, in a way, epitomises Meyerstein. He was clumsy and awkward; his voice was hoarse in its deeper register, and rose to a grating shriek when he became excited; he never mastered the art of shaving, so that there were always tufts of stiff greyish hair sticking out from odd portions of his face—and even if he had succeeded in overcoming all these things, there was always the crazily twisted face to put him hopelessly beyond any possible definition of good looks. And yet it is also true, as anyone who knew him will testify, that Meyerstein's physical presence was not altogether unpleasing. There was a lightness and grace about some of his movements—particularly, as I have said, with the hands; intelligence and imagination flashed from his eyes; he would dart across the room for a book he wanted to consult, and back to his desk to make a note of what he had found, with the impulsive speed of a boy of fifteen. He was not one of those people who give the impression that they would be happier without bodies. Some intellectual men are like talking, thinking heads set on inert trunks; they move as if their clothes contained not limbs, but rolls of linoleum. Meyerstein was not like that; nor, even when he was dying, did he suggest decay, lifelessness, helpless weight. I could never see him as paralysed even when he was in fact paralysed, when he was in a wheel-chair and could not move his limbs. And in his active years, the force of the mind that pulsed through him seemed to animate his body with more than the energy one would have expected even in such a big, powerfully-built man. He was, in a word, very much of the same physical type as Johnson, Beethoven, any of those large, clumsy, bear-like men of genius. Finally—and this is most important in trying to form a picture of him—he was no Bohemian. His clothes, however creased and soiled (for, like many solitary men, he was a messy feeder), were always of the correct style for the company he was in; he was equally free of the shirt-sleeve type of affectation, as represented at that time by people like C. E. M. Joad, and of the Chelsea beard-and-conduroy conceit. He dressed simply and quietly; the only licence he allowed himself was a taste for dark shirts, and even that was probably in the interests of cutting down on laundry bills.

THAT WAS my first impression of Meyerstein. What was Meyerstein's first impression of me can never be known in so much detail. But I can easily guess at it: he liked my youth, my enthusiastic *naïveté*, my utter absorption in "art and song." We began to see each other often; indeed, for some weeks I went every day to his rooms, to help him in checking over a typescript he had made of Coxere's manuscript. For an hour or so each afternoon we sat there, I following the typescript silently while he read out from the manuscript, his hoarse voice grating on and on through the short autumnal

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sunlight. "Coxere" is an old story now; the Clarendon Press published it in a neat little edition, which I treasured because it contained, among the acknowledgements, the first printed mention of my name; Meyerstein sounded a few people within the academic Establishment to see if there were any chance of his being given a doctorate for the editorial work he had done on it; they told him there wasn't, and one more light went out in his mind. That episode is closed, except for the occasional student of seventeenth-century *mores* who will read through Coxere's story and feel a flicker of gratitude to Meyerstein for having put it conveniently in his hands. But for me, looking back, the name of Coxere is a potent charm, recalling that first autumn and the beginning of my relationship with Meyerstein—which continued, with plenty of love and hate on both sides, during the nine years of life that remained to him.

It was an odd friendship, and yet, given the circumstances, very natural. Looking back, I realise that I wasn't fully aware of how extraordinary Meyerstein was. I was still young enough to accept the adult world as I found it; I couldn't pass judgment, because I knew nothing of mature life and had no normative background to refer things to. I was, for example, completely innocent about homosexual emotions. Not having been to a boarding school, I had very rarely given a thought to the subject. My schoolfellows and I had discussed "sex" a good deal (indeed, for about four years previously, we had seldom talked of anything else), but the mention of homosexuality had cropped up no more than two or three times, perhaps, in all those years, and then only as a curiosity. I mention this fact not only as being significant in itself (in view of the guilt-ridden obsession about homosexuality that seems to build up in every boarding school without exception), but as helping to explain the whole nature of my relationship with Meyerstein. We quickly became familiar enough for his life, though not, of course, his psychology, to become an open book to me; I knew where he went, whom he saw, and what he did; and I knew, beyond question, that he had no dealings with women. I did not find this extraordinary. My attitude was simply, "If he's lucky enough to be able to do without it, all the better for him;" for I was in the process of being trained to think of man's natural sexuality, not as something God-given, a glorious bounty, but as "the flesh," something that had to be resisted, ignored, or, if it made itself too obtrusive, "mortified." Of course, if I had gone up to Oxford from a public school where homosexual emotions had been the chief focus of everyone's life, I should at once have jumped to the conclusion that Meyerstein was only waiting his opportunity to make a pass at me—and this would have imparted a defensiveness to my attitude towards him and ruined our relationship from the start. But such a thing never entered my head. It even puzzled me, so utterly was the whole subject strange to my mind, that he should get so wrapped up in his friendships and enmities with the undergraduates among whom he lived; he was forever retailing stories about this or that piece of kindness, or selfishness, or malice, or aggressiveness, on the part of some whippersnapper who sat next to him in Hall. It amazed me; I had no suspicion of the extent to which his emotional capital was invested in these relationships.

There is no doubt, in fact, that the friendship between Meyerstein and myself was made possible by an extraordinary series of chances. There can hardly have been, anywhere in the world, an eighteen-year-old boy and a fifty-five-year-old man who could have approached each other so directly. I had no suspicions, no defensiveness, no reservations about him; he was simply a fascinating companion, his mind crammed with miscellaneous learning, the eternal student living for his books and music. Sometimes, thinking it over, I regret that during the years I knew Meyerstein best, I was so utterly simple and youthful; after all, the man had real problems, and terrible ones, and I might have been able, had I been fifteen years older, to help him face them. On the other hand—the reflection quickly follows—if I, as I am now, were to meet Meyerstein as he was then, we should simply quarrel violently and never speak to each other again. The thing that drew us together was precisely that I didn't criticise him, didn't pass any kind of judgment on him, either personal or literary. I even tried to like his poetry, and read a good deal of it, which I certainly couldn't do now.

And so we became constant companions, so much so that I can never think of my undergraduate years without pictures of Meyerstein flooding into my mind. Meyerstein sitting among his muddle of books and papers, or thumping on the piano in the downstairs front room; Meyerstein going for an afternoon constitutional, and stopping (invariably) at the fishmonger's for a pint of shrimps, which he would

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carry along in a paper bag and munch as he walked. (He always offered me a share, and I always refused; the things looked repulsive to me, and the impression wasn't helped by his habit of holding forth on some literary subject with a shrimp's head sticking out of his mouth.) Meyerstein feverishly hunting for his false teeth, which when alone he always took out and laid on the floor beside his chair—on hearing footsteps coming up the stairs, he would begin a frantic search for the teeth, always hoping, but rarely managing, to get them in place in time to call "Come in!" as the visitor knocked. After I got to know him well, he didn't bother to keep the teeth in for me, but this policy also had its complications; one day, pacing up and down the room as he talked, he crunched them underfoot, a grievous loss.

What annoyed him most about the teeth was having to pay for new ones. Anything, at any time, that required the spending of money always brought Meyerstein's paranoia straight to the surface. During the war years, of course, he extended his miserliness to food as well as money; food was scarce, and it was a patriotic duty to husband it—a respect in which Meyerstein was the world's greatest patriot. Once, while having tea in his lodgings, I felt something hard and sharp in my mouth, which investigation proved to be a piece of glass. Meyerstein, amid bursts of laughter, explained that while going across the road to College for his breakfast (he ate all his meals in Hall, though he lived outside) he had had the misfortune to drop his marmalade-jar and smash it; still, by carefully gathering it up, he had managed to save most of it, and what was a little internal bleeding from glass-wounds compared with the loss of half a pound of marmalade? I fled home and spent the rest of the afternoon alternately brushing my teeth, in case any splinters had lodged between them, and praying that I had not already swallowed any; Meyerstein laughed himself sick over the episode and referred to it for the rest of his life as one of his most amusing memories.

THE THING that kept our friendship going, as I say, was that I never sized him up. I don't mean by that to imply that he hoodwinked me, that if I had "seen through him" it would have meant the end. What I mean is that if I had been adult, if I had had any kind of mature, critical insight into the nature of his life and his ways, I could never have restrained myself from offering advice—and then, of course, he would have flown into one of his rages.

In the summer of 1944, very proud that my college study should be the scene of a historic meeting, I introduced Meyerstein to that gentle and good man, J. B. Leishman; I was puzzled when Meyerstein reacted violently against Leishman, so that to mention his name was to release a storm of invective, sneers, and paranoid accusations. Only afterwards did I learn that Leishman, realising how troubled and anguished Meyerstein was, had written him a letter in which he had made, in the kindness of his heart, a few practical suggestions for conquering his melancholia. The incident, which was repeated many times with different people, stays in my mind as an indication of what would have happened to me if I had been mature enough to see what was wrong with Meyerstein and try to help him. Because—and this is the point—no one could see a man suffer as he suffered, without wanting to help. However little of a do-gooder, however opposed to interference, one would have had to try to throw him a rope. His agonies were terrible to watch; he would have black days in which persecution mania and nameless dread descended and sent him, to all practical purposes, insane.

I could always tell when he had a black day on, as soon as I woke up in the morning. After moving out of college, I took lodgings at No. 13 Longwall, and my bedroom window was within a few feet of Meyerstein's, though it was one floor lower down. Morning after morning, in 1944 and '45, I woke to hear Meyerstein "making his noises." There was no other word for it; it wasn't singing, or shouting, but an unearthly blend of the two; I can't hit on any formula that will describe it in words, though, if anyone is interested, I can reproduce it in a way that good judges have admitted to be uncannily perfect. It was a noise that had its origin in the kind of crooning and mumbling to himself that an author naturally produces as he sits at his typewriter; I know, for instance, that I make queer noises myself—mostly gibbering, interspersed with a hellish cackle and bursts of obscene language—and I expect it will get worse as I grow older and more eccentric. Meyerstein was aware of his noises, and his own explanation of them was that "it all began with Harrow football." Forced out on to the football field, it had been his only defence to run wildly up and down, giving as far as possible the appearance

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of keen activity but in reality dodging the ball whenever it came near him, and all the while, to keep his sanity, "singing the symphonies of Beethoven." The habit took hold, and in later years, when the football field was a distant though still festering memory, he transferred his semi-automatic singing to the typewriter keyboard. When in the throes of composition, he would give out a terrifying "na-na-na-na-na-NAA-NAAAA-NAAAAAH!" which at one time nearly got him turned out of his chambers at Gray's Inn. On his good days, he would be silent except when actually writing; but when the bad fits were on him, he started to perform as soon as he opened his eyes in the morning. For eighteen months, I woke up several mornings a week to the sound of his sufferings, accompanied by an *obbligato* from my landlady, Mrs. Bashforth, who used to stand out in our yard, under my window, and wail in a thin, querulous soprano, "Oh, that dreadful noise! Oh, what a wretched noise!"

These morning awakenings are not among my happiest memories; the room was chill and damp, and I had no appetite for the watery porridge and mysterious sausages that would be carried up and left in my sitting-room, to go cold if I did not get up; I used to read late at night, so that my eyes, always working under difficulties because of the retina detachment that had caused me to be rejected by the army, "purged thick amber and plum-tree gum"; and on top of it, I would be woken up by "na-na-na-na-NAAA-NAAA," "Oh, that dreadful noise," "na-NAA-na-NAAA-NAAAAH-na-na," "Oh, dear, that dreadful wretched noise," "na-na-NAA." One morning, a woman's voice I had never heard before shouted from some neighbouring yard, "For Christ's sake stop that bloody row!" Meyerstein faltered, was silent for a moment, and then unleashed a fresh Niagara of yells and groans.

DURING 1944 and '45, the bad days were increasingly frequent, and the spells of calm and self-assurance more brief and uncertain. Oxford was not going to yield, and the fact was daily looking Meyerstein more squarely in the face. It was one of his last arrows, and it had fallen short of the target. Soon the war would be over, the young men would flood back, every inch of accommodation would be needed, and Oxford would no longer have any nooks and corners to spare for such as himself. And with this hope dying down in his breast, the various other passions, frustrations and bewilderments that racked him, and which for a time he had probably managed to calm, awoke into renewed obstinacy and cruelty. There were days when, as I climbed his stairs, the sound of his "noises" would be so loud, and have in it so much of madness and desperation, that I would pause on the final landing, hesitating whether to go on or to creep down again and visit him at some quieter moment. But I always went on: for anyone who knew Meyerstein, who had once been admitted to his confidence, the impulse to help him always outweighed every other.

So I would knock on the door, gently at first, more loudly if he did not hear me through the racket of his own groans and cries, till finally—after five minutes' hammering, it might be—he would suddenly realise that someone was there, fall silent, listen to see if one knocked again, and finally (after the usual flurry of looking for his teeth) call out sombrely, "Come in." And there, when I entered, he would be, sitting at his desk, working, always working, never slackening in his pursuit of the recognition that *must* come, if only he kept pounding away. Oxford, the world, his relatives, the ghosts of his parents—they would relent, one day, and let him in to sit at their fireside, if only he kept trying. And then waves of fatigue, of disgust, of unutterable despair, would break over him, and he would sit at his desk and groan—hour after hour, unable to do anything but stare at the muddle of books and papers, and groan. Usually, if a friend visited him, it would do him good, at least to the extent of getting him to launch into a passionate complaint as to how someone or other had slighted him, or some pundit had revealed a chink of ignorance ("He did not seem aware that the name Lycidas, for a soldier nearly drowned, occurs in Lucan"), and so substitute rage for despair, and feel more cheerful for a moment. But on his worst days, nothing would lighten his mind: he was tired, he was finished, the weight was too heavy to carry for another step. There was one day when I, having by this time arrived at the mature age of nineteen, and counting myself as one of Meyerstein's most solid friends, felt so shocked at his condition, so bristling with pity, that I tried to force him, by sheer nagging, to put his trouble into words. "But what *is* it?" I kept saying. "Why *do* you feel so awful?" For answer, he merely groaned, or fenced me away with, "All I know is that I can't see how to go on"; but finally, perhaps driven crazy by my insistence, he laid his head

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down on the desk, with a groan more terrible than any I had ever heard from him, then suddenly snapped upright, thrust his face into mine, and said with dreadful intensity, "It's like this, John Wain—*work* has to be *done*!" He brought this out with so much the air of a man saying something supremely meaningful that I fell silent, pondering the words, and could not afterwards go back to my questioning. But of course it was merely another of his formulae. The truth is that Meyerstein did not know what was wrong with his own mind. He must have been one of the last men in history to combine acute intelligence, imaginative insight, and the habit of constant introspection with complete *naïveté* about his own emotions.

WHEN I HEAR people question the usefulness of psycho-analysis, or express doubts about the central position it occupies in modern life, I think of Meyerstein. For the tragic thing about him is that help *was* available, if he could only have stretched out his hand to take it. Beethoven's deafness, I believe, resulted from a condition which can nowadays be cured, and no doubt the same thing is true of Chekhov's tuberculosis and even Milton's blindness. Still, one cannot simple-mindedly wish that "they had lived to-day, and been spared the suffering and premature death." If they had, the pressures of modern life might have been harder on them than anything imposed by their physical ailments; the seventeenth century may have been lacking in good ophthalmic techniques, but it was the only century in which Milton could have written *Paradise Lost*. But in Meyerstein's case, the treatment was there —and yet, for one reason and another, it was as inaccessible to him as if it had not yet been invented. I don't believe Meyerstein's neuroses were particularly complicated; a competent analyst, if one had managed to win his confidence, could probably have straightened out the whole lot in twelve months; and when I remember his sufferings, I can only grieve that such a cure should have been impossible, inconceivable.

BUT IMPOSSIBLE it was. Meyerstein could not have been dragged within a mile of a psycho-analyst. He had all the resistance that was normal in his generation (I can testify that even as late as the nineteen-thirties it was usual for English boys to grow up thinking of the whole range of psycho-therapeutic medicine as nothing but a dirty joke—what it must have been before 1914 can be imagined); and, in addition, he had the whole range of phobias which stemmed from his being "an artist." Even at his worst moments he comforted himself with the thought that he could write poetry and his academic detractors couldn't; it was his defence against the world, and he was terrified of any interference that might stop the flow. I think he would have died rather than submit to anything that seemed like outside interference with the mechanism of his imagination.

Nevertheless, unlike most of the people who need psycho-analysis and shy away from taking it, he never bothered to use the "I'm-perfectly-normal" defence. He recognised himself as a neurotic, and simply refused to take the next step and recognise neurosis as a condition both undesirable and curable. He had a deep interest in the work of any artist who had gone mad, or committed suicide, or been conventionally dismissed as a lunatic, and inasmuch as his own oddity made him a member of this fellowship, he even derived a certain comfort from it. Everyone, after all, has *some* club he can join. I don't think Meyerstein was ever afraid of going mad (his fear was always of "not being able to go on"), but he certainly recognised abnormal tendencies in himself. His homosexuality, as I said earlier, was pretty safely buried; but there were other things—the interest in flagellation, for instance, which led him to form a notable collection of whips. (He was thus gratifying two instincts at once when he wrote in his will that he bequeathed a whip to his father, that he might scourge himself with it.) His erotic fantasies often concerned the whipping of boys; I recall, suddenly, the first two lines of his "Ode to Lautréamont"—

> *O thou who compared'st ocean to blue backs*
> *Of beaten cabin-boys, receive my prayer.*

This quirk was largely responsible for his detailed acquaintance with the literature of the old sailing-ship days (he was an authority on Marryat, for instance); so that, in a sense, even the editing of Coxere, which allowed our acquaintance to spring up so fast, grew from this soil. He was quite clear-sighted about the matter, and once remarked to me that if he had his time over again he would not attempt to put any respectable front over an interest of this kind; to study honest writers like Marryat in order to gratify a thirst for reading about whipped cabin boys had come to seem to him

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tedious and artificial. As he put it, "If you must keep a brothel, don't try to make the whores domesticated!"

Altogether, Meyerstein's kinks followed a not unusual pattern. One sees it in Housman, for instance, of whom Auden so brilliantly wrote—

> *Food was his public love; his private lust*
> *Something to do with violence and the poor.*

The instincts, early turned aside from their proper course (the English public school system did a real job on Meyerstein), flowed into images of pain, violence, and death. Meyerstein loved a murder, especially if it was followed by an execution. He would walk miles—did, on occasion, make *me* walk miles—to examine the scene of a murder; and some of his favourite characters were hangmen. He used to speak with particular affection of one William Marwood, who he said had been the first to make the hangman's position a respected one in society, by such tradesmanly devices as having notepaper printed with the heading "WILLIAM MARWOOD: EXECUTIONER: BOOTS REPAIRED." "If Pa killed Ma," ran a Victorian riddle, "who'd kill Pa?" The answer, of course, was, "Marwood." Even I, who know little about murder and execution and would gladly know nothing, could not help being full of such scraps of information after a year or two of Meyerstein's company. As for murderers, he liked them even better than hangmen, if possible. I understand that one of his friends, whom I never met, was a man who, earlier in life, had been convicted of murder, and spared from execution because of his youth; he had long since served his sentence and taken his normal place in society, but to Meyerstein the unearthly gleam that irradiated the man was that he had murdered a fellow-creature. Towards the end of his stay in Oxford, he read me a poem he had just written, in which he declared his faith in his own superiority to the materialistic-minded:

> *For these anatomise a murderer,*
> *Yet never feel the love-touch of his fur.*

I think that was the moment when I first realised that Meyerstein was deranged; even I, with my extraordinary (and culpable) degree of innocence, couldn't take his word for it that an obsession with murder was a sign of spiritual health.[1]

I CALL my innocence "culpable," and so I am convinced it was. The Scriptures are in the right when they enjoin, "Be ye therefore as wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Looking back on my whole relationship with Meyerstein, I see in it an early example of a tendency in me that has done real harm, to myself and others, and which it cost me a great effort to uproot: the tendency to see in others only what I was immediately interested in finding, to concentrate on what I enjoyed or admired and let the rest go. I don't mean what is called "seeing their good points"; I mean deliberately not taking into account the whole nature of the person I was dealing with. In Meyerstein's case, I loved his passion for art, his frankness, lack of defences, companionable ways; I ignored, even when it was forced on my attention, the fact that he was crazed with a consciousness of failure, eaten up with resentments and jealousies, his fine natural intelligence only half available for the work it should have found to do in the world.

One consequence of this was that I was always startled, always annoyed and self-pitying, whenever a chance remark or casually revealed attitude happened to draw down on me the hailstorm of Meyerstein's rage and venom. These outbursts never lasted long, but no one who was close to him could avoid them altogether.

For instance: we were walking, one afternoon, on the high plateau of Shotover, whose keen air was always a relief from Oxford's spongy breezes. Enjoying ourselves, we chatted amicably, until Meyerstein happened to mention some book of Thackeray's. Had I read it? "No," I replied, adding innocently, "I've never got on to Thackeray." Meyerstein's explosion was immediate and appalling. It was rage, genuine rage and hatred: if not actually hatred of me, certainly hatred of the attitude he took me to have revealed. By speaking in this fashion of "getting on to" Thackeray, I had, in his eyes, lined up with the people whose businesslike (not to say tradesmanlike) attitude to literature was responsible for so much of his own neglect. A true scholar and gentleman doesn't *get on* to Thackeray; he reads him. I tried to argue the point, but it was useless. Our excursion was in ruins. One moment he had been happy; the next, I had stumbled against his lightly sleeping paranoia and awoken it, and in a flash he was angry, miserable, tormented. So thin was the crust, so delicate the balance of his brief spells

[1] The poem that contains this couplet will be found in Meyerstein's posthumous *Verse Letters to Five Friends* (Heinemann, 1954).

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of contentment. In my own defence (and it is significant of the power of Meyerstein's personality that I can't help defending myself as if he were still here, still glowering at me), I thought then and I think now that my remark was a very natural one. To this day, it is my habit, on approaching an author who is new to me, not simply to pick up one of his books and dive in, but to wait until I have not too many other things to do, and then allow myself the time to read several of his books in succession; it seems the only way to give him a fair chance. But to Meyerstein, it was the language of the enemy—and to hear it from my mouth must have seemed like a betrayal.

Still, on the whole our relationship was very free of these jolts; in fact, as his Oxford period lengthened out, he began to recognise me as one of his chief allies against this businesslike, prudential spirit. For his distinction between dons (worldly, discouraging, hidebound) and undergraduates (young, fresh, spontaneous) could hardly be expected to survive a prolonged sojourn in Oxford. There is a certain kind of undergraduate who is a professor *in petto*—ready to come forward as one at the appropriate time—and who already sees literature and art as teachable, examinable subjects at which he means to do well. Naturally Meyerstein attracted such types, industrious youths who realised that the companionship of so learned a man would put a fine gloss on their academic surface. Meyerstein never discouraged these people—he put all of them to his own kind of use—but he was sensitive to the delicate interplay of a relationship, and anyone who came to him in this acquisitive spirit would leave him fatigued and depressed, rather than revived as he usually was by young people. One such man in particular used to leave him almost suicidal; his only remedy was to run straight out of his own lodgings and into mine, bursting in to me with, "*Tell* me something! Tell me what you've just been reading! X has been with me, sucking at my brains!" Poor Meyerstein—those brains that everyone else wanted to use, but which somehow never seemed to do their owner any good!

BUT I SEE I am in danger of making the picture too monotonously dark. Because Meyerstein was a tragic figure, it does not follow that every day and hour of his life were tragic. He had a considerable streak of self-protective astuteness, not to say cunning, which he used with some success in fighting that lifelong battle against his environment. Indeed, from some points of view, his was a curiously successful life, given its demented premises. Many people have hated the age they lived in, but few can have been as methodical as he was in blotting it out. Although he lived fifty-two of his years in the twentieth century, the daily life of that century scarcely touched him. In his chambers at Gray's Inn, with the rumble of London filtered by quiet courtyards and whispering trees, he lived a life that would have seemed perfectly familiar to his Gray's Inn predecessors for centuries—to Bacon, for instance. Except for the telephone, there was nothing in his rooms that could possibly suggest the modern age. Even his love of music could not force him to compromise with modernity; his detailed knowledge of it was built up by a combination of concert-going and the playing over of piano arrangements, gramophone and radio being taboo. The internal combustion engine, naturally, was also taboo. He could sometimes be persuaded to travel by car, if it was to somewhere he wanted to go to, but he never lost his hatred of cars and the only motor vehicle I ever saw him willingly enter was a London bus. He had various rationalisations to offer ("I can't listen to music on the wireless. You're every minute expecting the wretched thing to break down"), but he must have realised, however intermittently, that his objection to modern apparatus was simply that it was modern.

The positive side to this, naturally, was his love of the antique. "That's old!" he would say, suddenly, on catching sight of a door, window, or chimney-stack, and immediately dart across the road to investigate. To walk round a strange town with Meyerstein was an extraordinary experience. His first action, on getting off the train, was to ask to be directed to the old parish church ("That always takes you straight to the old part of the town, you see"), and within a few minutes the cry would begin to go up: "That's old!" It was not that he had no æsthetic discrimination; as between one "old" thing and another, he preferred the more beautiful, and his taste was always fine. But age was the first important condition. He was like a man endlessly searching among the rubble of an earthquake, patiently trying to reconstruct the detail of a smashed city. That was, indeed, how he saw himself. He felt towards his "old" things the same sort of yearning pity that I had felt, as a child, for the wild creatures of the countryside:

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seeing them as the last survivors of a gentler world, doomed to be crushed and hounded by a brutal dispensation that grew daily more powerful. But where I, at seven years old, could do nothing except pity the wild animals and dramatise their desperation in my own imaginative life, Meyerstein, carrying his obsession onward through the years, built up more and more elaborate defences, till finally he enclosed himself so completely in the past that the twentieth century simply did not exist for him; he never, of course, read a newspaper and even during the war I doubt if he ever had much idea of what was going on.

MEYERSTEIN died, from a succession of strokes, in 1952. After a spell in hospital at Highgate (with "Karl Marx buried just on the other side of that wall," as he pointed out to me with a ghost of his old manic cackle), he was sent home to his Gray's Inn chambers to die in peace. I remember thinking, for the first time, what a lot of money it costs to die. He had two nurses, who sat with him round the clock; I don't remember whether both were male, but certainly one of them was, and Meyerstein reported with great satisfaction that the fellow's literary education was going well: "I'm getting him to read Jane Austen to me. He's never read her before and he likes it."

He died bravely; and, as one always knew he would, he kept a pen in his hand as long as he could hold one. He had failed to make his name stand out clearly in his own lifetime—so be it! He would keep on trying, still thinking, still writing, still chipping away at the rock-face, until the moment when he keeled over into the grave. For posterity *must* recognise him—he would force it to learn his name, by the sheer intensity of his struggle to be known, to be heard and recognised. Long before he died, the regard of future generations had come to be his chief ambition and the focus of his dreams. His own love of raising the dead, which was the driving force behind that huge random scholarship, had in it a self-regarding streak so obvious that even I could see it, little as I scrutinised his motives. The preoccupation with posterity was always active in his mind, and always near the surface. I remember one afternoon when he had come to tea, and was, as usual, turning over the books I had most recently bought. Among them was a pretty little set of Chaucer, three volumes in white imitation parchment, which had belonged to a man called "W. McQueen." I remember the elegant signature: "W. McQueen, Wadham, 1912," accompanied by a little drawing of a flower. Now (and I admit it with shame) I had, at that time, not yet shaken off the habit formed by my years of school life, where, if you inherited a book from another boy, you immediately crossed out his name and wrote your own down, very plainly, because if you did not he would claim the book back and sell it over again. So in writing my own name on the flyleaf of the Chaucer, I had put a single, decisive pen-stroke through McQueen's. You could still read his name; I was not afraid that McQueen would come back from the grave, or wherever he was, and make me pay for the books again; it was simply the unconscious carrying-on of a habit.

I CAN SEE the whole scene so vividly now. Meyerstein, settling back with a cup of tea at his elbow, opened the Chaucer, stared at it fixedly, and turned pale. Laying it down, he looked up at me with an expression of deep inward suffering—too deep to issue in rage. *This is what I'm up against*, he must have been thinking: *even in a youth whose instincts are generally sound, I find this urge to obliterate the past.* The dialogue that followed was short. "May I say something to you?" "Yes." "Never cross anybody's name out of a book." Silence. Tea was drunk, poured out, stirred, drunk again. "You see," said Meyerstein gently, "you might pick up a book one day and find that some person had crossed out *S. T. Coleridge*." Or *E. H. W. Meyerstein*, I thought. And I understood, for once, how deeply even I could wound him.

In all this, Meyerstein's instinct was sound enough. One of the reasons why his name is unlikely to be altogether forgotten is, undoubtedly, because of the great collection of books and manuscripts which was dispersed at his death; most of them went to libraries, where they are duly registered as bequests from him.

These bequests, in fact, were Meyerstein's last weapon against the indifference of the world, the one gun that would keep on firing after he was dead and at peace. The more's the pity that even there, his judgment let him down. Some unlucky chain of reasoning led him to bequeath a colossal sum of money to "Oxford University." Not to this or that college, where there might be a chance that his memory would linger on, but to the abstraction, the heartless, mindless, gutless University. It was his last effort to write

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his name on the wall in letters so big that Oxford would *have* to see it. I suppose the University acountants used the money to pay the interest on an overdraft, after which the name of Meyerstein was forgotten by everyone concerned within forty-eight hours. It all illustrates that wonderful line of Pope's—

Die, and endow a college or a cat!

But then Meyerstein hated Pope, and never read him. He always persisted in the nineteenth-century belief that satire cannot be poetry. But there it is. If you want to see a memorial to Meyerstein anywhere in Oxford, forget about the bequest to the University and look instead at the handsome knocker on the door of No. 12 Longwall Street—Meyerstein's gift to the house that had sheltered him.

WHY, FINALLY, do I write about Meyerstein at such length? Is the literary world not full of neurotics, people knocked out of shape by disappointment and envy of one kind and another? Certainly—and in my occasional forays into that world I have met people who made Meyerstein seem a model of balance and contentment by comparison. No, it is not his oddity that engages my attention in retrospect, nor even the part he plays in my story, important as that is. His appeal is to the historian in me. He is such a perfect example of a life smashed by collision with an Establishment. I shall never see another such example, partly because I have more control over my own life than I had when I was eighteen, and choose to live it in places, and among people, not open to that kind of social pressure; and partly because Meyerstein belonged to the last generation to feel that pressure with really devastating force.

Why? What did it matter to him whether he was "accepted" or not? In the answer to that question lies the tragedy of his life. Here was a man with substantial private means, enamoured of the beautiful and significant in art, and with definite talent of his own. With no need to earn his living by hack-work, he might have spent a happy life, gently and industriously bringing to their full growth the plantings of his imagination. Instead of which, his life was hell, and his talent produced hardly a line worth the paper it was written on. What went wrong?

It is no answer to say, simply, "The Establishment." Many intelligent and useful people have been born within that particular enclosure, and lived out their lives in it, and still managed to do useful work and be reasonably happy. It was Meyerstein's peculiar misfortune to be born on the *fringe* of the Establishment, to grow up under an invisible question mark: *does he belong or doesn't he?* His father was wealthy, knighted, a lavish contributor to charities; the household was cultivated enough (his mother had studied music under Sir Julius Benedict, who had studied under Weber, who had known Beethoven); from some points of view, the record could not have been bettered. But it was the very goodness of the record that put the young Edward into such an exposed position. As the son of such parents, growing up at such a time, he could hardly avoid a direct confrontation with the Juggernaut, with what results we know. He could neither run nor fight. With that money and social position, he could not simply move out of range of the Establishment. But with Jewish blood and a German name, he could not win complete acceptance without more than usual charm and address. In other words, he had to *work*. It was his duty to get himself accepted, or answer to his family for it. And if he rejected his family, he still had to answer to the spiteful little demon that they had reared and trained to follow him about. That demon never left him alone. It was always there, to run a needle into him at the sight of anyone else's success, anyone else's recognition. He could find relief in mocking hatred of his family ("If Pa killed Ma, who'd kill Pa?"), but there was no hiding from the demon.

THE OTHER THING one has to realise, in order to grasp the full history of Meyerstein's desperation, is the extraordinarily frank brutality of English upper-class anti-Semitism in the early years of this century. I, having grown up in a region where the Jewish population was small and inconspicuous, was as green about this as about everything else; I didn't recognise a man as Jewish unless he looked like a caricature of a Jew in a comic paper, and even then I had no very easily aroused emotions on the subject. There was no reason for me to have; anti-Semitism is only felt by people who are clinging to an exclusive or secure position, who have some special enclosure of their own into which they are determined to keep the Jew from intruding. In the world of my boyhood, it was commonest among Nazis (self-conscious about the large Jewish element in the German population, and anxious to keep it from sullying the Wagnerian

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purity of Aryan blood) and Trade Unionists (anxious to keep the refugees from causing unemployment). In Meyerstein's boyhood, it was commonest among the business class and in "Society"—since it was they, and not the population at large, who had something they wished to avoid sharing. And again it was Meyerstein's particular misfortune to be flung headlong into the place where the brambles were thickest. Harrow! Could anyone imagine a worse place for a sensitive Jewish boy, already frightened into insecurity and given a terror of not belonging? Why could not some merciful fate have arranged for Meyerstein *père* to go smash and lose all his money, so that the whole family could have sunk into protective obscurity? If only Meyerstein could have been brought up in North Staffordshire! Provinciality, which is supposed to be the root of so many evils, would have done him far less harm than the cruel pressures of upper-class Middlesex.

Well, the story is over now. No kind fate intervened; "Eddie" was sent to Harrow; the damage was done, and it only remained for Oxford to torture him in more refined ways, as becomes the greater subtlety of the University mind. And if anyone feels that I am exaggerating the harm done to Meyerstein's nascent intelligence at Harrow, the independent testimony will be found in Arnold Lunn's novel *The Harrovians* (1913)—a book that not only deals with the period when Meyerstein was at the school but actually introduces him as a character, "Brunstein," who on his first appearance in the story is described in so many words as "an unpopular Jew." Here are a few brushstrokes from the portrait:

> Brunstein . . . had come to the meeting expecting to be hissed. The unexpected intoxication of public applause went to his head like wine. He was quite overcome. They strolled into the music school together, Brunstein gesticulating wildly. "It was splendid, perfect in every detail. The whole setting was dramatic. The great crowd waiting in the yard like the mobs at Tyburn. And the way they cheered us! Magnificent! Harrovian! Worthy of our great traditions!"
>
> In his excitement he had not noticed the presence of a flannel who had strolled into the music school. "Oh, dry up, you ruddy Jew! I'll tell you what. You monitors are getting a damned side [*sic*] too lippy, let me tell you. Why the deuce should you wear bluers! I'd like to see the whole lot of you get a 'Phil' whopping."
>
> He went out growling. Brunstein collapsed like a pricked balloon.

Without bothering to annotate this passage, to explain what stage it represents in the plot or gloss such terms as "flannel," "bluers," and "a Phil whopping," one still feels safe in letting it stand as an indication of what happened, in the Harrow of 1907, to anyone who gave way to fits of emotional relief, who was voluble and gesticulated, who—in short—took insufficient pains to conceal the discreditable fact that the Creator had not made him an Englishman of the right social type. The point is hammered home in the book by the introduction of a sympathetic Jewish character named Solomon, whose function is to demonstrate that it is not, after all, impossible even for a Jew to win acceptance; all he has to do is, first, to develop a rhinoceros-skin about insults to his race, and secondly to batter his way into respectability with a horny pair of fists. Solomon does both these things. On his first appearance in the book, he is greeted with,

> "Hallo, Ikey! Any Jews among the new men? Hope not. What with old Ikey pawning our Sunday bags, one has about enough of the nimble Israelite."
>
> Solomon laughed heartily; the rest of the room tittered with forced joy.

Solomon is a thoroughly sound type—an Englishman under the skin, so to speak—and he shares the final curtain with the hero. The two of them are looking back, in classic fashion, on the long campaign they have survived: the hero remarks,

> "The wild animals at 'The Oaks' are all thoroughly domesticated nowadays."
>
> Solomon grunted his disapproval. "There was none of that bally tameness about the House in our day. Gad, do you remember our mills? Fought like young demons, didn't we? Well, dash it all, there's nothing like fists to settle these things, eh? We didn't like each other any the worse for bashing each other's noses in, eh?"
>
> "Yes," said Peter drily, "there's nothing like a good old English mill to get rid of the bad blood, is there, Solomon?"
>
> And Solomon agreed with enthusiasm.

Whereupon, the book ends. Were it not for the all-pervading *naïveté* of tone and language, I should be tempted to read all sorts of ironies and nuances into these concluding sentences; but it seems fairly clear that the undertones are not conscious ones. Solomon's schoolfellows have done him the kindness of bashing his nose in, thus symbolically releasing him from his Jewish appearance and hence from his "bad blood." Ikey, the nimble Israelite, has slugged his way through to Harrovian manliness with all the

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other young demons. And no doubt, the date being what it was, he was presently in uniform and having his insides torn out by shrapnel in Flanders. After Harrow, it couldn't have seemed very different. But for Meyerstein, there was no such blessed release. Purgation by violence was not for him. He could no more be Ikey than he could be Lieutenant Henry.

WHEN I THINK over this sad and wasted life, I feel glad that the meeting of Meyerstein and myself occurred when I was young enough to feel simple, unmixed admiration for him. What does it matter that I could offer him no sound advice on how to deal with his problems? I gave him—and it is no credit to myself, just a lucky accident—something he needed more: the admiration and encouragement of a younger person, someone with a stake in that future he so much dreaded. It was the most hopeful thing that could have happened to him. Inevitably, our intimacy lessened as I grew older. My life curved away from his, into its own morass of doubts, crises, and self-absorbed suffering. Had he lived another three or four years, I think we might have come together again, on a different level. As it is, he survives in my memory, undiminished as the years go by; I think of him often, with sorrow, exasperation, and affection. Even in death he is a vivid presence.

Demolition

I, the audience, unprotected
By curtains can watch the scene changed
On a muddy stage where I once acted.

Out of the rubble, fair and square,
A new building is rising up:
Where a pub was once, is thin air.

Casual workmen in the rain hack
Under no roof the walls of a house
Where I visited once some years back,

But wasn't invited again, although
Warm and at ease we talked and smiled
And were reluctant at last to go.

It seemed a beginning—these friends
I could grow by; but in fact no,
Accomplishing our various ends

We never met there in that way again.
And so unmoved I can endorse
This quiet destruction in the rain,
For that building stood of course
For good's failure to beget good again.

James Simmons

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THEATRE

What Though the Field be Lost?

By Nigel Dennis

THIS IS NO TIME for lies and self-deception; so let it be said stoutly that England's defeat by Brazil in the soccer quarter-finals of the World Cup has come as a heavy blow not merely to the nation but to readers of ENCOUNTER. We have said repeatedly in these pages that a catastrophe of this sort was bound to come: the whole trend of government policy, in so far as it has had a trend, has pointed for a long time towards failure of leadership and an increasing feebleness of national character. Is it coincidence that the recent upsurge of Liberal spirit paralleled exactly a growing tendency among English footballers to hug and kiss one another; and from which side of Centre, may we ask, came those who insisted that hugging and kissing on the football field was to be welcomed as a charming sign of spontaneity and enthusiasm? Finally, was there or was there not a Sunday newspaper which argued that by behaving so emotionally, the footballers were demonstrating the emancipation of the lower classes from the phlegmatic tradition of the more-gentlemanly games of rugby and cricket, in which kissing is scarcely known? This argument, which was *not* supported by ENCOUNTER, was at least partly responsible for the next major *débâcle* in English football, namely, the game against Bulgaria. Little did Shaw think when he mocked the grandiosity of this little nation in *Arms and the Man* that it would hold England to a draw only half a century later, with England playing in such a way as to excite derision even among Chileans. Our English footballers—those flowers and darlings of the lower classes—were, we are told, almost incapable even of putting their foot squarely to the ball. Many of them, attempting to do so, tripped over it and fell down. The South American spectators—a breed which Shaw would have classed even lower than the Bulgarians—were heard to shout indignantly: "Go home! You are nothing but a pack of old women!" It was incredible, but it was true. After that, humiliation at the feet of Brazil was inevitable. Our men are said to have shown courage. We commend them. To fight bravely against Brazilians would not in former times have been thought worthy of mention, but that was in the bad old days when our values were rather haughtier and our kisses exchanged more privately.

Having said this, we have said the worst that can be said about the prevailing spirit of the lower classes. We dismiss them as hopeless; we close our ears absolutely to those who insist that old women who trip over balls have the right to represent England and to be bought and sold, like so many solitaires, for many thousands of pounds. We will have no more to do with them —or rather, we *would* have had no more to do with them but for one thing, the transfer of *Chips With Everything* from the Royal Court to the Vaudeville Theatre. This important move, coinciding as by the hand of fate with our defeat by Brazil, is too great a trumpet call to go unheard. For despite its rather degrading and silly title, this work is one of the noblest tributes to the English fighting man since *Henry V* and *In Which We Serve*.

TO UNDERSTAND WHAT we are going to say about it, the reader must first throw his mind back to the end of the last war, the one against Germany, Japan, and, for a short time, Italy. During this war, young men entered the armed forces automatically on reaching a certain age, and when the war was over, the authorities, conscious that the peace was undependable and even hazardous, decided very wisely to continue this military training of young men under a system known as National Service. No class prejudice was allowed to interfere with this scheme of national defence: the young men who underwent National Service training came as much from the lower classes as from the middle and the upper. This was a big step forward from the "cadet" and O.T.C. methods of the past, under which only the better-educated and better-born were given the opportunity to be

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trained in the defence of our national liberty and democratic rights.

National Service brought to the fore two extremely distinguished men, on whose shoulders lay the heavy responsibility of seeing that the scheme worked. Both men were Regimental Sergeant-Majors with long experience of knocking raw civilians into some sort of military shape. We shall deal here with only one of them, ex-R.S.M. Brittain, since he is the one who has been the more closely connected with the theatre in recent years and has made *Chips With Everything* (the title was not his) England's soldierly retort to Bulgaria and Brazil.

DURING THE YEARS of National Service, astonishing legends gathered round the name of Sergeant-Major Brittain—as well they might, for none that benefited by his training ever forgot him. That his voice could carry clearly from one distant corner to another of a huge parade-ground was as nothing: what *was* impressive was the story that an order barked by him at Mons could, with a following wind, be obeyed by people taking the air in Windsor Great Park. And yet, in those days, nobody suspected a weakness for the theatre in Sergeant-Major Brittain, nor can we say how early or how late in his career he began turning over in his mind the great ex-officio work that is now at the Vaudeville. All we know is that when National Service came to an end, the Sergeant-Major lent a hand with the military sequences of certain films and that this experience must have been an invaluable preparation for *Chips With Everything*.

We have now mentioned twice that this work is at the Vaudeville Theatre, but we do not wish to give the impression that *Chips With Everything* is a play. No playwright could ever have written it, for had he attempted to do so, he would have spoilt it utterly by bringing his imagination to bear on material that can only speak for itself. *Chips With Everything*, to put it as simply as possible, is a direct reproduction upon a stage of military training as it actually is. It requires a stage only because it requires an audience, and an audience must be seated and housed. That is why *Chips With Everything* is at the Vaudeville Theatre and not at Aldershot.

In putting it across, Sergeant-Major Brittain laboured under difficulties that would have crushed a playwright. The object of *Chips With Everything* is to show—to *prove*—that the antics of Association Football *are not a necessary consequence of granting privileges to the working-class*. Caught young, isolated from their background, and trained properly, youths of *all* classes can be made a credit to their country. But how to prove this? Brittain had behind him many years of experience in dealing with recruits and the Royal Court Theatre allowed him free access to their wardrobe and technical resources. Perhaps he was also helped by the fact that actors nowadays do their utmost to be life-like and deplore style as a betrayal of honest documentary. But this was all. For the rest, Brittain had nothing to follow but the official Manual of Drill—and this, we suspect, is the only reason why so many people think that *Chips With Everything* is a play. For the modern fashion in playwriting is one of direct instruction rather than imaginative appeal, and there could be no better model for this manner than a Forces' handbook.

Now that Brittain has brought it off so triumphantly, it looks, of course, like the easiest thing in the world. In fact, it is a triumph of dedicated simplicity. Brittain has chosen the R.A.F. as his background, but he gives no reason for this "romantic" choice and we must assume that he decided not to involve his old regiment, the Coldstream Guards. He shows us the raw recruits in their quarters, and when we have had ample opportunity (almost too much!) to see their slovenly manners and ungainly, undisciplined behaviour, he sets quietly to work before our doubting eyes, shaping these oddities into a dignified body of men.

WE CANNOT go into all the details here. Suffice it to say that within half an hour of entering the theatre we have been told all we need to know about what is going to happen and can spend the remaining hour and a half simply watching it do so. Much of it is pretty tough, grim stuff, but this, of course, is what we hoped it would be: a nation cannot be defended by *footballers*. We see these flabby men running, jumping, and working themselves into a tip-top condition of physical fitness, and, since war is not a game, we see them taught to handle fire-arms and run fiercely at the enemy with fixed bayonets. Nor does the Sergeant spare us the sadder aspects of National Service: men who are clumsy and inefficient during the preliminary training must stay behind and go through it all again; but we noticed only one such incompetent, and he appeared to be a mental defective. In their off hours, the men dance, sing folk-ballads, and enjoy the music of Elvis Presley: what few class differences exist are talked over by them in the evenings and sorted out as well as could be expected. The evening closed on the men's passing-out parade, with the flag raised and the National Anthem played: if the audience was in tears, it richly deserved to be. For it was impossible not to reflect that National Service has been abolished

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now and that all our safety must depend on those who volunteer for what was once compulsory.

We have said that the men sorted out *all* class differences by discussing them openly in their off-hours. This is not entirely true. Brittain is, above all, a realist, and though he is always ready to *inspire*, he could never be persuaded to *lie*. His cast of Servicemen includes, quite deliberately, one youth whom we may describe as a *gentleman*. He is named "Pip"—a name chosen, we must assume, to clinch the clear traditional tie between Ian Hay's patriotic novel and *Chips With Everything*. From the moment this young man enters the barracks, we are conscious that there is something *different* about him. He is at ease among his fellows, even though they are not his "sort." His conversation is frank, unaffected, and free of the obscenities that pour torrentially from the mouths of the others. That Pip is marked out for leadership, we never doubt for a moment—and the biggest moment in *Chips With Everything* comes when suddenly we realise *why*. It is because Pip, the gentleman, is the only young man on the stage to whom democracy really means something. Pip, and Pip alone, feels in his heart that the others are his companions—and this regardless of the fact that they are demonstrably *not*. For we are shown very clearly that envy, laziness, obscenity, and an immature longing for home are the characteristics of the working class; while in Pip, all such egotism, all conviction that the world was created purely to please Pip, are scorned by him as deleterious, enfeebling, and un-Christian. In a very touching passage, Brittain shows this youth wondering whether he should not throw in his lot with the lower classes and, through the doubtful medium of the folk-ballad, lose his identity in theirs. It is his officers who point out to him that such an action would be irresponsible, generous though it might appear. In this neat touch, we see, albeit in miniature, why officers are such a necessary part of an army.

The marvel of *Chips With Everything*—would not *Chips on Everyone* have indicated better what Brittain was up against?—is that it succeeds in saying all these important things without ever becoming in the least degree fanciful and intellectual: we can think of no other documentary in which the *simple* truth carries anything like the same burden. Is there, for example, any man in England besides Brittain who could make the Manual of Drill seem, as Harold Hobson said, "Superb, touching, overwhelming?" Is there any other that could realise that although the theme of class-distinction can only be tedious on the stage, it is still the most exciting of subjects to men whose minds are obsessed with discovering excuses for their own stupidity? Brittain, as we have said before, did not set out to write a play, nor has he, in fact, done so. But one feels that he came within an ace of trying, and that his resistance to the temptation is precisely the measure of his success.

We conclude with a few selected compliments to those who helped Sergeant-Major Brittain to make his mighty killing. The stage-direction of Mr. John Dexter showed that even the civilian hand can add lustre to a military pageant, while the parade-ground prowess of Frank Finlay, who is actually a professional actor, gave the stentorian voice its proper place in the military scheme of things. The neat continuity, in textual form, that linked the chapters of the Drill Manual, was provided by Mr. A. Wesker, the well-known Norfolk bird-watcher.

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TELEVISION

Thoughts of a Captive Viewer

By R. H. S. Crossman

DOES THE VIEWER matter? Reading Henry Fairlie's indignant attack on "the idiot box" and Colin Welch's indignant attack on Mr. Fairlie, I found this question forcing itself upon me. Fairlie's answer is clear and unambiguous:

> Television is becoming an important way in which writers can earn their daily bread and butter; and it is what happens to writers that matters to me, not only from obvious motives of self-interest, but also because I believe that the only sense in which it is possible to talk about the influence of a medium like television is to hold on to the simple proposition that a writer should write, and should be encouraged and helped to write, what he wants in the manner he wants.

Of course it is perfectly sensible to examine television—or, for that matter, the cinema, the press, publishing and every other medium of communication—from the writer's point of view. It is also perfectly sensible to consider it, as Colin Welch did, in terms of the politics of free enterprise and consumers' choice. But what struck me in reading the Fairlie-Welch debate was that the one point of view to which both of them were completely indifferent was that of the viewer. Yet television, in the last resort, must surely be judged not by its success in providing Henry Fairlie with a living or Colin Welch with a demonstration of his political principles, but by what the viewer gets out of it. And it is fairly obvious that neither Fairlie nor Welch are viewers, except in a very occasional sense of that word. For obvious reasons this is not unusual. The kind of people who are capable of writing well *for* television or making a worthwhile report *about* television or taking a responsible decision *on* television are rarely viewers—even though many of us (for I class myself, except during periods of illness, among these non-viewers) try hard to make up for this deficiency by occasionally snatching time to see *Tonight* or even sitting through a whole evening's programmes.

But is it reasonable to talk of viewers as though they were a determinate body of people, with a definable point of view? Certainly not, if we use the word in the same way as the TAM ratings. If we mean by "the viewers" anyone who has his television turned on of an evening, there is no common characteristic to define them, except that the programme is turned on. But suppose we define the viewer as anyone for whom television programmes "form the main part, or at least an important part, of his entertainment and of his cultural experience." In doing so we make the word correspond with a whole group of words that describe audiences —the theatre-goer, the cinema-goer, the music lover, the art lover, the sports fan, the reading public. To belong to the reading public it is not sufficient merely to have a few books in the house, or even to read them occasionally. So, too, the fact that I myself enjoy going to the opera and an occasional concert does not make me a music lover, a member of that audience which musicians and the organisers of music have to consider seriously. Nor can I claim to be the kind of sports fan whose failure to attend matches the F.A. has to analyse, merely because I turn up at the Cup Final or occasionally show my loyalty to my local team.

When I talk about the viewer's point of view, therefore, I am directing attention to the quite clearly defined group who—though they vary in their tastes and education—have two common characteristics. (1) They depend on their television sets for a good deal of what makes their leisure worth having. (2) Though their tastes vary from Soccer to Wagner, they display the three qualities of regularity, attention, and discrimination.

IT MAY BE OBJECTED that, in comparing the viewer with the live audience, I have made a false

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analogy and that the proper comparison is between viewers and newspaper readers. This, indeed, was the assumption on which Colin Welch accused Henry Fairlie of becoming an "enemy of freedom." Anyone who believes in the freedom of the press, he argues, must admit that it can only be preserved if newspapers are organised on a competitive commercial basis—*ergo*, television must be organised on a competitive commercial basis if it is to preserve freedom and ensure the democratic right of consumers' choice.

The argument sounds convincing, until we notice the difference between the newspaper reader and the viewer. Of course there are people who spend hours reading their newspaper, or even several newspapers, and for whom the daily study of the press forms an important professional or leisure activity. But their number is tiny and for the most part limited to Fleet Street. As has often been observed, the only real newspaper readers are those who write them. The normal reader glances through his paper at breakfast or on the way to work and only pays attention to the few topics in which he is interested. The sports fan concentrates on the sports page, etc. Newspaper reading, in fact, is for most people a small and insignificant part of their daily life. In contrast, the viewer spends a large part of his leisure in front of the little box, which provides him with so much of his entertainment, information, and mental stimulus.

The fair comparison, therefore, is not between the newspaper and television but between the newspaper and the news bulletins put out by the BBC and ITV. If Mr. Welch had argued against the idea of a centralised television news service, run by a single Government monopoly, no one would have disagreed with him. But what he actually suggested was that television, because it is merely another kind of newspaper, should be run commercially. And that argument fails because the analogy does not hold.

I NOW TURN to Mr. Fairlie's contention that we should consider television exclusively from the point of view of the writer "because the only sense in which it is possible to talk about the influence of television is to hold on to the simple proposition that a writer should write, and should be encouraged and helped to write, what he wants in the manner he wants." Why does Mr. Fairlie express such a violent and unreasonable anger at the mere suggestion that the interest of the viewer merits consideration? Judging from the rest of his diatribe against "the idiot box," he feels that, though there is profit as well as pleasure to be gained from occasionally selecting a programme to look at, regular viewing is an inferior, derivative activity. Live theatre is superior to television theatre, live music to television music, live A. J. P. Taylor, lecturing in his college hall, to A. J. P. Taylor televised on the little screen. The writer needs his television fees in order to live. But, in catering for the derivative tastes of the mass television audience—particularly on commercial TV—he is degrading his literary and artistic standards.

I hope I have interpreted Fairlie's feelings correctly. Certainly his reaction against dragging the writer down to television's present lowest common denominator is wholly understandable. So too is Kenneth Tynan's exasperation at what happened to him when he got off his critic's stool and found himself producing a prestige programme for commercial television. I thought it a pity that he devoted so much of his article in ENCOUNTER to attacking the TV critics. But there was one paragraph in which he touched on the real problem and at once revealed that he, too, like Mr. Fairlie, by disregarding the viewer has failed to comprehend the revolutionary character of the medium. "Artistically," he remarks, "there is nothing unique about television *except that its audience is split up into units of two or three.*"

BUT THAT EXCEPTION, to which Mr. Tynan devotes thirteen nondescript words, is precisely what makes television potentially the most powerful medium of mass communication ever invented. Indeed, it would be better to admit that, before it was invented, there was nothing worthy of the name "mass communication." As long as audiences had to be collected into theatres, concert halls, and arenas, the numbers influenced and the kind of influence that could be exerted on them was limited. Steam radio, as Hitler showed, could be used by a propagandist of genius for mass mesmerism, particularly if it was combined with the new kind of demagogy created by the dominance of the loudspeaker. But the little box that stands in every home, keeping the family company hour after hour, gives to those who control, produce, and write these programmes far greater, because more insidious, control of their captive audience. The little box provides something for everybody—company for the lonely, comfort for the unhappy, entertainment for the family, culture and education for the ambitious. But one has to be a regular viewer before one succumbs to its influence. To see a programme occasionally, or to see it merely because, as a writer or producer for television, one is interested in its effects on the viewer, is not, in my sense, to "view" at all.

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To all this Mr. Fairlie and Mr. Tynan are curiously blind. And the reason for their blindness, I am pretty sure, is the fact that they themselves are not viewers and instinctively despise the viewing audience. It is this which puts them at such a disadvantage in working for this new medium, compared with the dramatist and the producer in the live theatre. They are regular theatre-goers and know what it feels like to be a member of a theatre audience; but neither Mr. Fairlie nor Mr. Tynan is a member of the viewing audience.

IT SO HAPPENS that last winter a serious illness kept me completely bedridden for three months. Very soon I discovered the terrors of boredom: one cannot have visitors and read books for 16 hours a day. The obvious cure for this boredom was radio and television, and very soon I became a regular viewer. Previously, like Mr. Fairlie and Mr. Tynan, I had regarded radio and television as a means of earning a living; now I was a member of the captive audience which relies on television as its main form of entertainment and cultural experience. I found the difference in my point of view so remarkable that I began to observe my reactions. With a radio set at my left hand and a television at my right, I set myself up as a one-man Listener Research Unit. Each morning I studied the *Radio* and *TV Times* and divided up my day. Very soon I found that I was spending about an hour in the early morning, an hour at mid-day and two or three hours between 6 and 11 each evening on viewing and listening. Next morning I wrote up my impressions of the programmes I had seen.

Looking back over the old, battered copies of the *TV Times* and *Radio Times* in which I scrawled, I am struck by the high proportion of time that I spent on listening to sound radio. One reason for this, no doubt, is my interest in news and politics. I very soon discovered that anyone who wants to know what is going on, either in the world at large or at Westminster, need never turn on his TV set. He will get far more information far more compactly from the BBC's radio news and commentaries. At a rough calculation, I should guess that the BBC sound news at 10 p.m. usually contains a third more information than the main evening TV news—and is followed by talks which provide a commentary on the news, to which there is no equivalent at all on the little screen. Occasionally the pictures on TV news provide some visual aid, but normally they slow down the bulletin and distract attention from its content. As a medium for imparting information accurately and quickly to the attentive listener, sound radio is, I believe, intrinsically superior to TV.

AND THE SAME APPLIES—though I am not convinced that this is an *intrinsic* difference—to discussion programmes. Each Thursday evening while I was in hospital—thanks to the wisdom of the programme planners—I used to hear a half-hour BBC sound discussion starting at 8.30 p.m. At 9 I switched to the ITN news, which was immediately followed by *This Week*, commercial radio's pocket response to *Panorama*. At 9.45, when *This Week* was over, the BBC was usually showing boxing, which I adore. This went on till 10.15, when the BBC's political magazine, *Gallery*, began. I must have seen these three consecutive programmes eight or nine times. As a result, I came to the conclusion that the only serious discussion took place on sound at 8.30. In half an hour, without the distraction of vision, three or four speakers can get down to business and deal with a topic. In *This Week* and *Gallery* on the other hand, most of the discussions seemed to last for seven or eight minutes and ended before anyone had time to say anything new. Anxious to retain his audience and aware (as I have been told so often) that no one ever listens to what is said on television, the producer hurried on to a film or an interview. To some extent this criticism applies to *Panorama*. Week after week the television critics write this programme up for its tremendous range and educational value. One has only to compare it with *From Our Own Correspondent* on BBC sound at 8.15 each Saturday morning to realise its shortcomings.

If I had been musical, I would have had to prefer sound to TV on almost every night of the week. Even as a theatre-goer and book-reader, I found that, though viewing is much pleasanter than listening in bed, I switched to sound at least three nights in each week. On the BBC, with my light out and my radio on, I listened to superb performances of Ibsen, Strindberg, and Shakespeare, as well as a production on three successive nights of Aeschylus's *Oresteia* that knocked the Old Vic into a cocked hat. While I was in hospital there wasn't a single production of a play, either on BBC television or on commercial, that could even be compared with what I heard on sound.

BEFORE I got home I had come to some very firm and clear conclusions. Television, I had decided, is only an improvement on sound radio in a very limited range of subjects. For sport, of course, it is superlative, particularly for boxing and wrestling, as well as for travel and nature films. But in most serious entertain-

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ment and discussion it seemed to me then that the extra dimension usually added only distracting visual irrelevancies. The sound performance of *Rosmersholm* on the Third was the first occasion on which I really understood the play, though I had seen it half a dozen times on the stage. And, to move from the sublime to the ridiculous, I was given the opportunity of first hearing *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* in sound alone and then seeing it on television. I have never understood why the critics labelled Pinero the master of stagecraft, and on sound as well as vision the clumsy mechanics killed the drama. But the sound version, precisely because it left more to the imagination, was a good deal less unconvincing, as well as containing a good deal more of the original Pinero text.

When I left hospital I assumed that my conversion to sound radio would be permanent. But it wasn't. True, I still listen to the BBC in the early morning and at 10 p.m. for news and comment. True, I still find *Any Questions* livelier than any television magazine except, of course, Cliff Michelmore's *Tonight*. But as soon as I ceased to be a captive, lonely audience and returned to home life, I found it increasingly difficult to turn out the light and sit through an evening listening to *Tristan* or *Richard II*. Even in hospital, as I lay alone in the evening, it had cost an effort of will to switch on the good sound programme I had that morning decided to hear, instead of sitting inattentively but cosily in front of *Coronation Street* or *Z Cars*. Back home, I had to isolate myself in order to listen attentively. I didn't feel up to sitting alone with my radio set for two hours, when this involved going into another room and leaving my family round the fire. Irresistibly, the balance of my selection changed day by day, until those superb sound performances I had listened to alone in hospital were being replaced by silly little programmes on the "idiot box."

THE TRUTH IS that the superior merits of sound radio as an artistic medium are inseparably linked with two grave disadvantages. In the first place, it requires from the listener powers of concentration and an ability to disregard distraction which I at least do not possess except when I am hard at work. Moreover, the radio set, as contrasted with the television set, is an austere companion, which isolates the listener. If you are alone, it intensifies your sense of loneliness; and if you are in company, it insists that you should cut yourself off from your companions and give it your undivided attention. Television, on the other hand, precisely because of its superficiality, is thoroughly comfy: the picture on the screen provides company to the lonely and an entertainment for the family circle which can be enjoyed with not more than half of your attention.

In order to see this difference between the two media, one has only to listen to one half of an international football match and view the other. The *listener* is alone in his room, hearing about a match going on a long way off and regretting that he isn't there; the *viewer* is on the ground, in the crowd. The reason why television has captured the mass audience from sound radio is not because it is a superior medium of communication (in many ways, as we have seen, it is inferior), but because of its gregarious, comfortable effect on the viewer. The listener must have the strength of mind to enjoy loneliness. In the privacy of his home the viewer joins the herd.

WHAT CONCLUSIONS can I draw from my experience as a captive viewer? In the first place, it seems to me essential to redress the present absurd unbalance betwen sound and television. For the reasons I have given, any hope of winning back from television a large, regular audience of attentive listeners is unrealistic. From the public's point of view, the main function of sound radio in future will be to provide background noise, interspersed with spot news, for certain well-defined groups, which include the housewife at work, the aged and the sick, and the motorist. This is the job at present performed with admirable competence by the BBC's Light Programme, and there is every reason to believe that local stations, by adding local news, could make the background noise even more satisfactory.

One of the few advantages of sound radio, in comparison with television, as a mass medium, is its unassertiveness, its pleasant facility for providing a secondary background to primary activities. "Music-while-you-work" applies not only to the housewife or the factory hand but to the intellectual at his desk, writing an article or reading a book for review. Radio is the ideal medium for soothing the inattentive, whereas a television programme, however trivial, silences conversation and demands attention. Of course the telly also caters for the half-attentive viewer, but it does so by preventing him from doing anything else, whereas "background" radio encourages him to do so.

In radio, in fact, there is the sharpest contrast between the deliberately trivial programmes, designed as background noise, and the serious programmes which require total attention. It seems to me that the BBC understands this distinction very well and is fulfilling these two completely different functions quite admirably.

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What is needed now is a realisation by writers, producers, and the rest of the people who mould public opinion that sound radio is still an important medium of artistic expression, separate from and—for the time being at least—superior to television. Once it became fashionable for Top People to become regular listeners instead of occasionally modish viewers, the BBC would be encouraged to spend more money on its serious sound radio programmes.

HERE, OF COURSE, WE DEPEND on the radio and TV critics. During my time in hospital I read them regularly, in the weeklies as well as in the dailies. I soon discovered that radio and TV criticism are covered in separate compartments and the former is scarcely to be found outside the week-end press. What would help the serious listener or viewer would be the kind of critic who chose to review the sound programme on a particular evening, when it was clearly more interesting than anything on television. But this cannot happen as long as all the critics in the daily press concern themselves exclusively with TV and so give the impression that sound radio is old hat and not worthy of attention. I have noticed recently that more and more of my friends are finding their way back to sound radio. Nevertheless, the critics will not be fulfilling their function until they take their share in the job of teaching the serious listener and viewer to choose the programmes which show each medium at its best.

At present we have the fantastic situation where television is expected to do everything better than sound. The other day, for example, the BBC decided to show viewers each month some of the products whose merits are discussed in *Which?* The result, as anyone could have predicted, was disastrous. Despite all the efforts of Richard Dimbleby, the programme was dull and did not assist the prospective buyer to choose between the products. At once the television critics blamed the BBC for falling down on its job. Apparently it did not occur to any of them that the right medium for educating the consumer about the detailed merits and demerits of a product is not television or sound, but the printed pamphlet, with photographic illustrations, which the Consumers' Association puts out! All a television show could do was to advertise *Which?* and remind us that there are still fields of information in which the written word is vastly superior to the speaking image.

ASSUME, however, that with the help of the critics, the proper balance between viewing and listening is achieved, with sound radio accorded priority in the four fields in which it is clearly the superior medium—news and information, classical drama, serious music, and background noise. Even so, there remain two central problems—how to improve the quality of television output and how to satisfy the strong but inarticulate demand of the viewing public for good programmes that demand attention, in addition to the fill-in material in front of which the family can sit and chat.

This is not a new problem, limited to the viewer; far less has it been created by commercial television, though its coming greatly aggravated it. In the old Reith era, when the BBC broadcast a single programme, it was just as acute, though the solution was rather different. Instead of giving the public what it wanted at the high peak listening hours, Reith imposed a diet of adult education. How well I remember giving half-hour talks on Plato's *Republic* between 7.30 and 8 p.m. on twelve successive Thursdays! Now that television has become the main public service, that kind of programme is tucked away in the morning programmes for schools or late at night; and the high peak listening hours are divided into half-hour slices of entertainment designed to compete with ITV.

What can be done to improve things? One thing at least I learnt from my three months of compulsory viewing. The attempt to spatchcock occasional, long, prestige programmes into periods usually reserved for popular entertainment is nearly always disastrous. The regular viewer, denied the light entertainment he expects, is infuriated. Even more important, as both Mr. Fairlie and Mr. Tynan attest from practical experience, the producer and writer of these grandiose prestige efforts are under constant pressure to water them down and make them palatable to an audience which simply doesn't want them. It is this pressure, quite inevitable under these circumstances, which explains the grovellingly low standard that television—BBC as well as commercial—nearly always achieves when it tries to put on anything serious at a peak listening hour—a product slashed and shortened in order to fit into schedules and then emasculated to suit the popular taste.

In order to see what is wrong with televised culture to-day, one has only to compare it with televised sport. In this country very large audiences exist with sufficient background knowledge, taste, and devotion to appreciate the fine points of boxing, wrestling, Association and Rugby football, cricket, tennis, and swimming. These highly educated and passionately attentive audiences are not prepared to be fobbed off with curtailed versions of the second best. They insist on an uncut, full-length performance by the best stars—and they get it. In hospital I

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learnt to betray the cause of Lady Summerskill; and at the end of a few months' regular viewing I began to appreciate some of the fine points of boxing and—let me confess it—of all-in wrestling too. Regularly I could watch for an hour without interruption, just as one could regularly see the whole of a football match in the afternoon and then very often study a long, admirably condensed version at 10.30 p.m., in order to improve one's taste and comprehension of the game.

Imagine for one moment that the drama or music or political discussion were accorded the same rights on our present single channels which sport gets, without any protest. The mere suggestion stimulates the annihilating answer. The audience for each of the arts among regular viewers is far too small to achieve such a breakthrough. And, if the mogols of ITV or the mandarins of the BBC insist on hiring Mr. Tynan as producer and Mr. Fairlie as writer of occasional prestige programmes, the result is merely to discredit, in the viewer's eye, the subjects with which their unpopular and, as they themselves admit, miserably unsuccessful programmes deal.

SURELY THE CONCLUSION is inescapable—and it is the same conclusion that the BBC reached after Reith's retirement. On sound radio the functions of providing background music for the half-attentive and serious programmes for the attentive listener simply do not mix. The result of this discovery was, of course, the development of the Home and Light programmes. And the result of carrying the discovery one stage further was the Third Programme, specifically reserved for the cultured élite.

I am clear in my own mind that the attempt to provide a segregated programme of culture should not be repeated in television—at least until there is some prospect of raising present standards and achieving programmes of genuine quality. But the case for two BBC channels was unanswerable long before the Pilkington Committee made it. After all, ITV, by definition, gives the public what it wants. And when it spatchcocks a prestige product into its programmes, it is departing from its proper function in order to placate its critics. To add another commercial channel, where Gresham's Law is bound to operate, is surely an extravagant waste. No one can see two variety shows simultaneously and few of us, if cross-examined a few hours afterwards, can tell the difference between one evening's entertainment and another. I write this as an addict of television triviality. Set me down in front of the little screen in order to see *Coronation Street* and as often as not I find myself there four hours later, with the *Epilogue* on. This addiction to relaxation, shared by the vast majority of the British public, is harmless enough and, as consumers, I agree with Colin Welch that we have an absolute right not only to enjoy it every night of our lives but to choose between a programme of trivialities put out by the BBC as a public service and a programme of trivialities put out by ITV with the exclusive object of compelling viewers to see the commercials between the programmes. But, having conceded this right to triviality twice over, it seems to me essential to consider the claims which each of us can make as members of specialist audiences.

THESE REFLECTIONS were down on paper before the publication of the Pilkington Report; but I cannot conclude without relating them to the findings of the Committee. Although the Committee's indictment of ITV was fully justified, I think it is a pity that they did not concede, clearly and unambiguously, the right to triviality which is emphasised throughout this article, as belonging to every viewer in a free society. By failing to do so, the Committee opened itself to the charge of out-Reithing Reith in its governessy attitude to popular entertainment and in its assumption that television as a public service must always seek to 'improve" the viewer.

If only the members of the Committee had spent more time viewing as real viewers, studying sound broadcasting and applying its lessons to television, they would have been forced to realise that one of the main functions—even of a public service television system—is to provide every evening slabs of light entertainment for anyone who claims the democratic right to waste his time in front of his television set instead of wasting it on reading a romantic novel or science fiction, or playing darts in the pub. For there is not—as the Committee sometimes rather priggishly seemed to suggest there was—anything inherently degrading in supplying trivial entertainment for a mass public, always provided that the special interests of minorities are fully catered for elsewhere. And this dual obligation to the mass and the minority can only be met adequately by a system of public service television which has two programmes roughly corresponding to the Light and the Home Service of BBC sound radio.

Thanks to the Pilkington Committee, the BBC now seems certain to get this second programme. It is essential therefore for those of us who care about raising standards to start taking steps to ensure that, while the balance of the existing BBC programme remains roughly the same, the new channel is properly used. This means that it should be reserved exclusively for programmes

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that assume interest, knowledge, and attention in the viewer, treating him in fact as a specialist minority. Whether the interest, knowledge, and attention are devoted to films or to drama, to sport or to ballet, to politics or to religion, is a question of balance within the programme. What is vital is that the general standard of programme on the new channel should be such as to require of its audience interest, attention, and knowledge, and therefore to put off anyone who is not interested or at least potentially interested in the subject. There is a real danger that the Labour Party will be so excited by the support given to its views in the Pilkington Report that it will assume without question the BBC's right to the new channel and take for granted that the new opportunity will be used in the right way. To do this would, I am sure, be a gross dereliction of duty on the part of the Opposition. I should like to see the Shadow Cabinet insisting that the Third Channel should only be given to the Corporation on the express proviso that it is used to cater not for the "Light Programme Mass Public" but for the "Home Programme Viewer"—the audience of interested, knowledgeable, and attentive individuals that exists, potentially at least, for every topic under the sun.

As War

(*The Unknown*)

Unsolved, long day, and perilous fires,
Why should I be dead? My skull
Weighed in any instrument
Is mine. This alley is damp.
I have struggled every muscle up,
And fallen back far enough to see.
There is no sky. Lives shot through space
Fall through space. Unending.
My skull that is fleshless
Rises. Who has done this to me? And why me?
All that voices me departs. I have nothing to say.
No one to listen. Damp with new blood daily
I have no presence. I am unfelt.

Whoever damned my life in his way
Is my curse. Evil, despised, corrupt
Be his memory. I am ciphered
By him who could decipher me, willing.
In his desire he has ignored me. What keeps him away?
Ignorant, wilful, he is no enemy
But was, I have heard, love.

Thomas Parkinson

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W. H. Auden

Encomium Balnei

It is odd that the English
a rather dirty people
should have invented the slogan
Cleanliness is next to Godliness
meaning by that
a gentleman smells faintly of tar
persuaded themselves that constant cold hydropathy
would make the sons of gentlemen
pure in heart
not that papa or his chilblained offspring can
hope to be gentry
still
John Bull's
hip-bath it was which made one carnal pleasure lawful
for the first time since we quarrelled
over Faith and Works
Shakespeare probably stank
Le Grand
Monarque certainly did
thanks to him
shrines where a sub-arctic fire-cult may meet and marry
a river-cult from torrid Greece
rose again
re-sweetened the hirsute West
a Roman though
bath addict
amphitheatre fan
would be puzzled
seeing the caracallan acreage
compressed into such few square feet
mistake them for hide-outs
warrens of some outlawed sect
who mortify their flesh with strange
implements
he is not that wrong
if the tepidarium's
barrel-vaulting has migrated
to churches and railroad-stations
if we no longer
go there to wrestle or gossip
or make love
you cannot purchase a conjugal tub

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St. Anthony and his wild brethren
for them ablutions were tabu
a habit of that doomed
behavioural sink this world
have been
just as he thought
at work
we are no more chaste
obedient
nor
if we can possibly help it
poor than he was but
enthusiasts who were have shown us
besides showing lovers of nature
how to carry binoculars instead of a gun
the unclassical wonder of being
all by oneself
though our dwellings may still have a master
who owns the front-door key
a bathroom
has only an inside lock
belongs to-day to whoever
is taking a bath
among us
to withdraw from the tribe at will
be neither parent
spouse nor guest
is a sacrosanct
political right
where else shall the Average Ego
find its peace
not in sleep surely
the several worlds we invent are quite as pugnacious
as the one into which we are born
and even more public
on Oxford Street or Broadway
we may escape notice but never
on roads we dream of
what Eden is there for the lapsed
but hot water
snug in its caul
widows
exiles
failures may feel as self-important
as only children
and a sage
be silly without shame
present a Lieder Abend
to a captive audience of his toes
retreat from rhyme or reason into some mallarmesque
syllabic fog
for half an hour
it is wise to forget the time
our daily peril

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and each other
good for the soul
once in the twenty-four-hour cycle of her body
whether according to our schedule
as we sit down to breakfast
or stand up to welcome
folk for dinner
to feel as if
The Pilgrim's Way
or as some choose to call it
the War Path
were now a square in the Holy City
that what was wrong has been put right
as if Von Hügel's
hoggers and lumpers were extinct
thinking the same as thanking
all military hardware
already slighted and submerged.

Stanley Johnson

May Morning

Accipite, quaeso, *ποημάτιόν τι* quod neque scientia neque animi motu composui. Quod autem cum scilicet doctissimi elegissent ut apud encaenia perlegerem, indulgentia rogo audiatis. Ne nimis oculos vestros defatigam, excruciam aures brevius perscripsi.

Soft on that hilltop we awoke
And in each other saw the world below.
Soft had we climbed, spoke
Not a word, made no sound though
The morning cried aloud for praise
Yet on this most glorious of days
Silence was the only God we might invoke.

Questing the sun through a drench of dew
We made our way to the beacon mound;
Wet, happy we burst through
To the paean of springtime, found
That here at last on the morning moor
We might know something pure
And new.

Perversely precarious, determined to cheat
Topographical delimitation,
We climbed up the cairn, till our feet
Surmounted all terrestrial equation.
We were high, free, proud
And all our emptiness was a crowd
Filling what was beneath.

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Caught, transformed broadcast again
In a Sunday peal of eye and hair
Agamemnon's warning flame
Hand-in-hand with the sea-blown air
Swept over all the promontories
Alerted all Hellenic signatories
With the news that Troy was taken.

Passing thus from height to height
Steeple, tower, hilltop took that light
And sent it on its way,
Until at last this great expansion
Became coterminous with creation
And one ecstatic vast compression
Made past and future all one day.

That day was ours, uniquely and alone
Standing together, our love had grown
In silence sterner than the sea.
Subsumed beneath eternity
It became itself eternal, reborn
From some vague insubstantial form
Into a thing of great glory.

So once in Mykonos at dusk
I thought May Morning came
And once upon a Persian Mosque
I felt I knew some name
Of God, when in the tiles of Holy Writ
It circled one whole minaret
And streamed to heaven again.

Rod Stuart

Baz has got Sixpence

BAZ! I AM SAD FOR YOU.
Stoning yourself on sixpences
Pouring them into the belly of the bandits
Beating your brains out with the evil arm of the fruit machines.
Oranges and lemons rang the bells of St. Clements.
Two cherries. Five silver pills are spewed up.
Your face wears the maniac smile of the tanner addict
As you feed them back into the unsated fledgling mouth.
When will you pay me screamed the bells of Old Bailey.
You'll have bought one before you win a jackpot.
Why don't you marry it? Carry it off to your bed?
Come home Baz.
I don't want to be martyred on an altar of sixpenny swallowers.
When I grow rich whispered the bells of Shoreditch.
I'M TIRED BAZ!

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Questions

Who sewed insanity into the lining of my skull?
Who planted the seed of worldsorrow in my heart?
Who knocked the ash from an atomic cigarette into the turn-ups of me?
Who warmed me in the thighs of Africa?
And fed me at the breasts of the world?
Who made me see the beautiful shapes of words,
Taught me to hear the song of colour?
Who poured the rum of love through me,
Filled me with its alcoholic remorse?
Showed me its beautiful petals
Bursting from the bud of its pity?
Who stood me in the manure of war
So that I grew six feet small?
Who walked with me into madhouses
And straightened the snake of sickness in my mind?
Who stripped the sheet of madness from the face of my battle-torn corpse?
Lifted me gently on angel dove wings?
WHO?

Knowing

I saw seaweed growing from the sidewalk
saw the sun dying in the road
saw a frog leap into the moon
saw a corpse carrying its coffin
saw a cockerel lay an egg
saw a head with a man under its arm
and I wondered.
Saw the sea turn from the shore in scorn
saw my mind walking in front of me
saw a sparrow with a wooden leg
saw a scarecrow kiss his foe
saw a tree turn into a skyscraper
saw a city sprouting leaves
and I pondered.
Saw a paint-brush pointing hands
saw a footprint on the sky
saw a railway roll itself up
saw a baby pushing its mother in a pram
saw a blind man at a movie
saw a cripple climb a hill
saw a clock murdering time
and I knew.

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NOTES & TOPICS

A Social Commitment

A FEW MONTHS ago an engraved card dropped through the letter-box, inviting my wife and myself to attend, at seven-thirty for eight p.m. on a certain June evening, the Midsummer Banquet at the Mansion House, where our host and hostess would be the Lord and Lady Mayoress. I did not then know what the Midsummer Banquet was, but I swiftly found out that it was inaugurated last year, in honour of the Arts, Science, and Learning; I also gathered that it had replaced on the mayoral calendar a fairly dispiriting feast in honour of the Fruiterers or some similar faction of middlemen. *"Evening Dress,"* said the card, and also: *"Decorations."* Apart from a bronze medal awarded to me at school for throwing a cricket ball, I am totally undecorated, so that presented no problems. I have evening dress—featuring a sky-blue dinner-jacket of Italian silk which gives me the appearance of a Swedish band-leader—but I got my secretary to call the Mansion House to make sure that this would be acceptable. A rotund major-domestic voice answered the phone. My secretary identified herself and asked: "Does evening dress mean black tie?" "No, madam," said the voice reproachfully, "it means evening dress." Which meant trouble, since I have neither white tie nor tails. Eager, however, to shovel it in with my idols (would Stephen Spender be there, I wondered? As it happened, I wondered right), I decided to accept the invitation, apprehensively aware that this would entail an experience to which I had never before been exposed—a visit to the Brothers Moss, makers and hirers of ceremonial garb.

Moss Bros. is a big establishment near Covent Garden which performs an indispensable function in an age of collapsing class barriers and increasing class-consciousness: for a deposit and a small fee, it enables its clients to leap for a few treasured hours into the upper class. Outwardly, it is a tailor's shop, but I have never knowingly met anyone who owned a Moss Bros. suit. The soul of the organisation is its hiring department, where you can fit yourself for any social occasion that still partakes of the nature of ritual. I arrived on a Monday morning, hoping that trade would be slow, and was ushered into a spacious and sleekly furnished waiting-room already full of two dozen other frauds. Perhaps I slander some of them by saying this; one or two of them may have torn, stained or otherwise damaged their formal wear so recently and irreparably that they were forced to seek replacements; but most of us, I could tell from our studiously preoccupied air and our careful reluctance to look each other in the face, were frauds in the simplest sense of the word. Either we were pretending to own a garment we could not afford, or we were aspiring to membership of a class to which we did not belong; or both. I went to the reception desk, whispered my needs and was given a numbered card. I then waited for my number to be called over the public-address system: it was like sitting in a cross between a dentist's anteroom and London Airport.

BROCHURES, STREWN ACROSS shiny coffee-tables, beguiled the next twenty minutes. Was I planning to get married? If so, Moss Bros. would clothe my bride and myself, my parents and hers, the best man, the bridesmaids, the ushers and even the pages: what, asked the catalogue, could be more fetching than a page in a kilt and sporran? The question puzzled me a little: since when had a miniature Scot been a status symbol? Possibly, I supposed, since Prince Charles enrolled at Gordonstoun. In a crisis, having equipped the wedding party with everything from high heels to toppers, Moss Bros. would no doubt be able to provide a hired bride to avoid disappointing the guests. I was pondering this theme when an amplified female voice said: *"Seventy-two for fitting."* I was seventy-two, and a sombrely clad, quietly spoken fitter escorted me into the inner sanctum, or tribal robing-place. He behaved with the grave discretion of an undertaker addressing someone lately bereaved, a manner perfectly appropriate to those clients (and they cannot be few) who resort to Moss Bros. because the movement of history has bereft them of their class status. They are genuinely in mourning, and must be handled with tact. My case was different: having no class status (I was born in a Birmingham suburb), I had nothing to lose.

Except my trousers, that is; and herein lay my embarrassment. I had just come back from a holiday with a trunk full of dirty linen that had gone straight to the laundry. I was left with no underwear; beneath my trousers I was naked. The undertaker led me into a cubicle—the final confessional, in which one is stripped of every vestige of socio-sartorial pretence—and sized me up. It seemed I was too tall to be easily suited. An escape-hatch occurred to me. "Just give me the tails," I said. "I can wear the trousers I usually wear with my dinner-jacket." The man quickly disabused me: in order to avoid show-

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ing an expanse of shirt between trousers and white waistcoat, it was necessary to have a high waist-line, whereas mine (as I sourly admitted) sagged low around my hips, beyond the aid of braces. He vanished and soon reappeared with a likely pair folded over his arm. "Try these, sir," he said; *and stayed*. How to get rid of him? If I unzipped and revealed my nudity, I would surely be ejected; Moss Bros. would scarcely rent their garments to a nut-case who might well return them infected with crabs or something even less appetising. I thought fast and feigned extreme shyness; I even summoned up a blush, with a hint of coyness that implied latent homosexuality, and sent the fitter scurrying from the cubicle. I managed to test the trousers and re-don my own before he knocked on the door and re-entered. Tail-coat, boiled shirt and white tie were rapidly organised, and I left ten minutes later with my snob-kit packed up in an anonymous black suitcase supplied by the firm. I had deserted the many and joined, by courtesy of Moss Bros., the few.

WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS I had buttoned and studded myself into my new armour of formality, and was climbing the stairs of the Mansion House with my wife, less unwontedly attired, on my arm. We were part of a queue four hundred long, most of us bemedalled and many of us with orders dangling from our necks and clattering against the starch. Before being welcomed by the Lord Mayor, Sir Frederick Hoare, we passed through a glittering gauntlet of breast-plated halberdiers—extras, perhaps, left over from "Fire Over England." One shook hands with merchant bankers clad in regalia dating back to *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, and then spent thirty minutes in a crowded room getting gently sloshed and greeting fellow-contributors to ENCOUNTER. Next came a fanfare, blown on trumpets with banners dripping from the fuselage, and echoed by an answering blast from some adjacent chamber; whereafter in one stalked and took one's place in the banqueting-hall.

Seen from above, the tables were arranged like a comb with seven teeth; we were halfway down the third tooth from the left, reading from the entrance. Our table-mates included Agatha Christie, Philip Larkin (whose tails looked as odd on him as mine on me), George Rylands, and Rupert Davies, T.V.'s Inspector Maigret, whose autograph was requested by more waiters for their children than anybody else's. W. H. Auden though listed in the programme failed to turn up. The Lord Mayor then entered, pursued by a gaudy and doubtless traditional crew, among whom one spotted people bearing maces and other expensive baubles, and a man in a huge fur hat shaped like an inverted volcano. It was like the Hanseatic League all over again. Grace was not said but sung, by a strenuously conducted quartet up in the gallery above the ornately pilastered hall. Peering through my prayers, I confirmed the presence, as advertised, of Rebecca West, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sir Maurice Bowra, T. S. Eliot, Cecil Day Lewis, Henry Moore, A. J. Ayer, Victor Pasmore, and Frederick Ashton, as well as a bevy of scientists unknown to my one-cultured mind; I also noted gaps where Vanessa Redgrave, Tony Richardson, and Harold Pinter were advertised to have been. Had John Osborne been invited, I wondered? Or Arnold Wesker? And if so, had they declined because they saw in the invitation an attempt on the part of commerce to regain its ancient grip on the arts? English drama, after all, began with plays performed by the mediæval guilds; it then passed into the hands of private managements, where it has substantially remained, despite minuscule injections of subsidy from the state. Unless the state grows more generous, patronage from the City may well come to seem seductive.

During dinner—which consisted of melon, a good lobster pilaff, something called "Spatchcock of Chicken" (which seemed to be *poussin* carved horizontally instead of vertically), and raspberry gâteau—a small orchestra plucked and sawed away on the balcony, performing a repertoire presumably designed to honour English music. It comprised a selection from *"Merrie England,"* excerpts from *"Glamorous Night"* and *"The Dancing Years,"* the Offenbach *"Barcarolle," "Moment Musicale"* and *"Gems from the Sullivan Operas."* About halfway through I lit a cigarette. Within seconds I was struck hard between the shoulder-blades by a middle-aged man in elaborate uniform, who bellowed: *"No smoking before the Queen's health!"* Taking him for an official of some kind, I stubbed out my fag, since failure to do so might lose him his job. A moment later I saw him resuming his seat a few yards from where I was sitting; he was not an official but an officious guest. I instantly lit up again on the principle that it is one's duty to flout useless and invalid customs as long as the flouting deprives no one of his livelihood. I had taken one more drag before the Queen's health was announced. It was the only act of mutiny I committed in the entire evening.

THE ANTHEM WAS PLAYED, and we all stood up and sipped a respectful dreg. No sooner had we sat down than a second toast was proposed to "Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, the Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and the other members of the Royal Family." Again we

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straightened up, and again, unbelievably, the anthem was played. The Lord Mayor, after the usual pair of prelusive fanfares (one from upstairs, the other from an empty room some fifty yards distant), then told us in solid, pedestrian prose that he was immensely proud to be entertaining us, and that the City of London was about to launch an Arts Festival, beginning in a few weeks' time. Lord Todd of Trumpington made a crisp and pawky speech in praise of the arts, disclaiming his qualifications to do any such thing; Sir Kenneth Clark, replying, sniped briefly at orators who declared themselves unfit for the job, and went on to make a speech uncontroversial to the point of chloroform. *"Où sont les neiges d'antan?"*, quoted in reference to C. P. Snow, was as funny as he got. The applause spattered for a moment and died, and a loving cup went round the tables with strict observance of ritual. You are offered, by the lady on your left, what might be the F.A. Cup full of what seems to be port. You bow; she curtsies. She removes the lid, and you sip, taking care not to stain your shirt through overenthusiasm. You wipe the cup with a napkin, she replaces the lid, you repeat your bow, and she repeats her curtsy. You then turn and present the trophy to your other neighbour; but until the latter has gone through the motions of bobbing and sipping and wiping, the woman on your left must remain standing, to protect you against assault from the rear. Only the unthinking could find this intricate routine meaningless; at the heart of a mercantile economy, one needs constant assurance that one is not about to be stabbed in the back.

The mayoral procession trooped out, and the gathering dispersed. One hailed friends and enemies, flushed like oneself and fluctuating between shame and satiety. Food and drink had been generously pumped into scientists and artists; but nothing had been done for science or art. A gesture had been made, and perhaps a few new friendships: at banquets, despite their claims to promote togetherness, one seldom talks to more than five people—one's immediate neighbours and the three people opposite. Whether minds met, as intended, I am far from sure. Beyond doubt, the evening was a victory of ceremony over spontaneity, of Tudor pomp over contemporary circumstance. Whoever lost, Moss Bros. unquestionably won.

Kenneth Tynan

Towards a Study of the Scourge

By David Astor

THE DESTRUCTION by the Nazis and their accomplices of nearly all the men, women and children of Jewish descent in Continental Europe—numbered in their millions—was the most serious and sinister event both because of what happened and because of what it means or implies. What happened was a cowardly massacre on a scale never before even imagined. It was characterised by a degree of inhumanity —a lack of mercy, of any regard for age, womanhood or childhood—which remains almost incredible. Most sinister of all, it was characterised by a fantastic perversion of the sense of right and wrong, so that what was purely destructive, and therefore criminally evil, seemed to those who directed, supported and carried it out to be a useful work, a defence of their culture, a cleansing operation.

The ideas in the heads of these people were not new, but merely a revival, or an intensification, of superstitious hates and fears, which had been known in Europe for over a thousand years. They were not rational ideas based on evidence; but irrational ones—indeed, as irrational and as superstitious as if it were thought that all left-handed people, or all red-haired people, had to be driven out of the community, or killed. The ideas of anti-Semitism are intellectually on no higher level than this.

Now, we all think and behave irrationally at times—usually when we are excited or alarmed or stirred by conflict; and there are other times when we may find ourselves using violence rationally, *e.g.*, in self defence. But when anybody uses violence irrationally, when he uses it not only unjustifiably, but also for no tangible purpose—not even to rob, not

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even to eliminate a rival or an opponent—then his actions border on the insane. If, what is more, he uses such senseless violence without being excited, without passion, calmly, methodically, on working days only, then he is approaching even closer to what we call insanity.

This is what happened in Germany and elsewhere between the years 1933 and 1945, and on a vast scale after 1941. But it was done by people who were technically not mad at all. None of the Nazi leaders had a medical history approaching insanity; the German public who gave them support and power were not mad people, but ordinary folk; even the individuals who carried out the most insane extermination policies of the Nazi leaders—for which they were ready to disrupt their wartime transport system at a crucial time—were not mad in a medical sense. We have seen how sanely Eichmann behaved throughout his trial—and, indeed, throughout all his private and public life—except for this terrible work of officially-approved human destruction; and he was only one of several thousands who must have been needed to carry out a crime of this size.

WHAT ARE WE confronted by? Was it a temporary outbreak of madness? Or was it a manifestation of the possibilities for evil that are permanently latent in all human nature? Perhaps these two are the same thing; perhaps what we have seen is an example—a supremely terrible example—of the pathological possibilities of the normal mind.

What I think is clear is that we cannot yet say much that is worthy of these events—either in attempting to describe them or in attempting to analyse their real significance. In saying this I do not mean to impugn the work of devoted scholars like Gerald Reitlinger and Raul Hilberg, who have faced the painful task of collecting and recording the facts. What I mean is that it is not yet possible to convey the full reality and meaning of these facts. I doubt whether it is yet possible to describe them credibly in a work of literature or in a film. There is an even more striking and far more surprising absence of academic study of the political and psychological processes which produced this terrible manifestation. When a great event, so terrible, so strange, so nearly insane as this happens, here, in the centre of the most advanced continent of the world, in one of the mother countries of our European civilisation, in the middle of the twentieth century, one would have expected at least an enquiry comparable to that currently devoted to the minor crimes of our juvenile delinquents, or a study comparable to that which has been devoted to the relatively small-scale killings of the Kikuyu and other such primitive tribes. But this has not happened.

I BELIEVE THE BASIC reason for our inability to describe these events—to make them part of mankind's experience—and our apparent inability to study them academically to the extent that they so obviously deserve, is that we cannot quite believe that these events really happened. We know they happened—yet they still seem to us impossible, incredible. This is in some degree true of all of us, even of those who have lived near to these events or have actually witnessed them. These events do not accord with our concept of what ordinary sane men can do. If we were to accept that ordinary people have such terrible possibilities within their nature, this would be deeply alarming and disturbing to ourselves.

The question is what should we do now? Should we accept that these events are too terrible to be studied, too alarming to be made a part of mankind's experience? There are those who feel that these matters are best left alone, that it is even dangerous to make people aware of what happened. Their feeling is, I believe, that to bring alive these events may only put ideas into people's heads, may act as some sort of incitement.

This attitude is, in my opinion, unwise. If there is any possibility that by incitement these dangerous tendencies in people might break out again in some new form, then, surely we should do something about it, we should warn people. But how else could people be made aware of these dangerous latent tendencies except by study and by the public dissemination of knowledge? I, personally, have no doubt that more safety lies in facing these awful facts about human nature than in ignoring them.

But even if we should decide that these matters ought to be studied more thoroughly, how could we go about studying them? How could we overcome the numbness, the sense of unreality that has prevented us from making a proper study so far?

SOME BELIEVE that only an artistic breakthrough, an assault on people's imagination, could start this process up; others argue that a subject that is so deeply charged with emotion could only be approached via the intellect. No doubt, we need both approaches. But the difference is this: You cannot commission artistic genius to function. Whereas you can by an act of will commission an intellectual study to be made. This is the only course which is in practice open to us. We could commission a

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major intellectual study of the whole subject.

This, in my opinion, is what should be done. A centre of studies of what might be called "political psycho-pathology" should be founded, perhaps here in London. It could be based on the Parkes and the Wiener libraries; it could be an independent institute associated with London University, as is Chatham House.

But what should this institute study? Should it study only the fate of the Jews—uniquely terrible in scale though this has been? Or should it study the fate of the Jews as one example, albeit by far the worst, of a widespread human phenomenon, namely, man's capacity to destroy his fellow beings without rational motive? There are four reasons why this latter approach would be the wiser. *First*, this wider view corresponds with the truth—there have been other exterminations; and mass exterminations are themselves related to all lesser killings. *Second*, to study the lesser examples together with the greater will make easier the investigation of the greater. If you understand the processes which produce a lynching, you are more likely to be able to fathom the processes which underlie the greater perversions of moral sense. *Third*, this wider study is more likely to prepare us and our children to detect future symptoms of this disease, in whatever form they may appear. *Fourth*—and perhaps the most fundamental reason for studying these atrocities as a latent possibility in all mankind—this approach brings us squarely up against our own difficulty in coming to terms with these facts. Unless we dare to study these events as something that was done by ordinary people like ourselves, we may continue to be paralysed and remain unable to study them at all. The belief that inhumanity and perverted morality are something which belong particularly to one category of the human race, namely, the Germans, is as intellectually false and stultifying as anti-Semitism itself. To take the opposite view may well be the necessary condition for success—the only way to reach the truth and make its meaning generally available.

I BELIEVE it is of the utmost importance that this should be done. It is urgent that we master this mystery, that we should learn more of the fatal, fearful process of thought which makes people feel, not only justified, but that they have a duty to destroy others.

We cannot tell what next may excite this process of mass psychology. Its next form may not be racial or religious, but political (as has happened before in times of revolution or civil war).

The world situation of to-day is, as we all know, dominated by the rivalry of two ideologies. There are people on each side who believe that all the world's troubles stem from one small but powerful category of person (in one case, capitalists, in the other case, Communists); that this small category constitutes a world-wide conspiracy aiming primarily at their debasement or destruction; and that after the elimination of that category (whether it be the bourgeoisie or the Communists) all would be well.

These strongly-held views, which imply a "devil" class among men, and the perverted moral attitudes which this produces, contain an emotional element that resembles the way of thinking we find in anti-Semitism. Whether civilisation itself will be destroyed may depend on whether too many people in either ideological camp impose on to the actual political and economic rivalry this emotional fantasy view of the "devilish" character of the other camp—and therefore cease to be able to see them as fellow human-beings. But, of course, this is not the only possible cause of future manifestations of the pathological destructive process.

We must try to approach these grave matters as unemotionally as possible. It is the most appropriate way to approach them if we are to build a worthy monument to the memory of the six millions. That monument should, I believe, be an attempt to understand what happened, an attempt to insure that the underlying psychological processes will become better known, an attempt to reduce the chances of further mass destruction in the future.

But to speak of these events, coldly and remotely, as "phenomena" or "manifestations" is not to ignore what they cost in individual suffering. If pain could be measured, it would, I believe, be found that more physical and mental agony was experienced by the victims of these slow and deliberately cruel actions than mankind has known in centuries. One day, this suffering must, and will, be understood and expressed.

Some of the very greatest contributions to progress in the understanding of man and his environment have been made by European Jews —Freud, Einstein, and many other men and women of outstanding abilities. We will never know what wealth of human talent the world has lost in the destruction of European Jewry, or what contribution to solving man's problems the descendants of those lost families might have made. But it is surely our duty to see that the unhealthy political circumstances and the diseased individual and mass thinking which led to the tragedy of their loss will be as closely studied as is the scourge of cancer.

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Thoughts at the Wall

By Walter Z. Laqueur

Bernauer Strasse

WEDDING, a small village in the 13th century, a spa in the eighteenth, and Berlin's most typical working-class area ever since, is now a Western enclave in East Berlin. Germany's leading electrical plants, such as Borsig and the AEG, first set up their factories here some 140 years ago, and re-emerged after the second world war. This was *Rote Wedding*—the reddest district of Red Berlin. The Communists were the strongest political party in the German capital in 1932; in Wedding they held on to their plurality even in March, 1933, after Hitler had come to power. Wedding held a unique position in German communist folklore—in novels, pictures, and songs (*"Der Rote Wedding Marschiert"*); it always offered the true proletarian setting. Thirty years later it is a prosperous lower middle class district, commonly called the "green Wedding." Bernauer Strasse was little known outside the area, though it gave its name to an underground railway station. But then it became part of the Frontier between East and West Berlin, and the border between the Soviet and the French sector ran down the middle of the street. When the wall went up in August, 1961, this was for a short time the main escape route. East Berliners used to jump to freedom from the third, fourth, or fifth floor, some into the nets held out by Western fire brigades, others to their death. There are several wooden crosses on the pavement; from a passing bus, tourists photograph them. The windows of these houses were then walled up and the houses evacuated. But East German border police peep out from their loopholes. On the Western side of the street it is business-as-usual, with the exception of one *Bierstube* which has closed down; there is a table in the show window with a verse to the effect that so near to the *Mauer*, both the wine and the general mood has become *sauer*. The pub-keeper has retreated to Schoeneberg (have the guests followed?). A small group of Indian students passes: "Not very nice here." They are neutrals; they try hard not to commit themselves.

This is not the only divided city in the world. There was Trieste, and the division of Jerusalem is even more complete. But even the neighbourhood of the Mandelbaum Gate in the North of the Holy City, desolate as it is, is not quite so depressing. The line between Israel and Jordan was fixed following an armistice between two warring nations. Bernauer Strasse divides one nation.

WALTER LAQUEUR, *editor of* Survey *Magazine in London, is now en route to Moscow where he will be writing "Thoughts in Red Square." His most recent book was a history of the German Youth movement entitled* Young Germany.

Berlin & the British

ENGLISHMEN have rarely had a feeling for the former German capital. To them, Berlin stood for Prussianism, stiffness, hard work, ugly streets, a funny and somewhat repulsive German accent, and the late Dr. Goebbels. But it also stood (for a few) for the roaring 'twenties: the Kurfuerstendamm, the youth movement, *"Wer hat denn den Kaese zum Bahnhof gerollt?"*, German expressionism, Sally Bowles and Family Landauer, was it really "a city without culture," "without *savoir vivre* or elegance"? Of the real Berlin, few Anglo-Saxons have ever been properly aware. It had its own peculiar popular culture, from Nante, the character standing at the street corner watching the girls go by, to Paul Lincke and his marches, from Heinrich Zille and his drawings to the monstrous *Resi* ballroom of our days (where the customers send flirtatious special delivery messages via table-side phones and pneumatic tubes). There was the Berlin of the liberal and Jewish intelligentsia, and also the Berlin of Theodor Fontane. Few outside Germany have heard of Fontane, apart perhaps from students of German literature; curious that the works of the greatest German novelist between Goethe and Thomas Mann have not been translated. In the 'forties and 'fifties of the last century Fontane spent years in London as a correspondent and wrote half a dozen books about life in England, Scottish Ballads, and the London theatre. True enough, it took the Germans themselves some fifty years to discover Fontane. In one of his poems he

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describes the unexpected guests who showed up on his seventy-fifth birthday. Fontane was the bard of Frederick II and his generals, and had described in great and loving detail the city and its countryside; his work had been one long paean of praise for the great Prussian families who were the heroes of his historical novels. But the Arnims, Treskovs, and Zitzewitzes did not show up to honour him, only the old aristocracy of a very different race. The poem ends: "Come on, Cohn."... Can the deep ignorance in the West of the real Berlin be without political consequences? As things are, many British and Americans care no more about Berlin than about Bogota, and does anybody lose sleep over Bogota?

Berlin & Bonn

MANY GERMANS, too, have disliked Berlin intensely. Beethoven wrote that he found the Berlin public "very well educated" and Schiller praised its great "personal freedom" and its lack of "restraint." But for many others it was the hydrocephalus of Germany; it did not seem to have grown organically, it was a parvenu of a city. There is a whole literature of opposition to Berlin's attempt to dominate German art and letters. *"Los von Berlin"* was the slogan of right-wing extremists and south German particularists alike; Berlin was the image of "international fashion," and not of "our German national character." It took the post-war years and the capital's transfer to provincial Bonn to make them realise what had been lost. Bonn (as a Swiss journalist put it) is located between Brühl and Bad Godesberg—Berlin between Washington and Moscow.

On Walls

CHINESE love walls, Americans don't. A Chinese city is not complete without walls. "Walls, walls, and yet again walls form the framework of every Chinese city," says a writer on Chinese architecture. They even use the same word, *chen'g*, for city and city wall. Americans prefer the wide open spaces: "something there is that doesn't love a wall" (Robert Frost). The wall as a symbol: oughtn't one to look it up in Stekel? The wall as a reality: the Berliners had several walls before; the most famous was erected by the Great Elector. He faced a difficult task after the Thirty Years war: of the 1200 houses of Berlin, one third had remained empty and the rest were utterly neglected. It was probably the dirtiest city in Germany; the inhabitants kept pigs, usually in the open streets. A special ordnance was needed in 1641 to remove them. The old wall came down with the expansion of Berlin in the last century. The Great Wall of China has not yet come down; it was built by the emperor Shih Huang Ti, who carried out a vast programme of reforms. Historians report that the system of decentralisation and militarisation broke down immediately after his death "not through any inadequacy but because there were not enough efficient men available...."

Ulbricht and After

EFFICIENT MEN there will be after Ulbricht, but how many true believers are there among the younger generation? Many Western observers have gone on record with dire predictions about East German youth, which, they say, will be "lost" if Germany remains divided for long. They uttered the same prophecies ten, and fifteen years ago, but experience so far has not borne them out. In contrast to the Hitler Youth, the "Free German Youth" of East Germany does not appeal to emotions and instinct alone, but also provides a "scientific philosophy." This produces citizens far more "conscious" and ideologically sophisticated than National-Socialism ever did. But it works both ways. The "young pioneers" enthusiastically identify themselves with the ideals of communism and the hatred of its enemies. At seventeen or eighteen, on the other hand, young men and women become a bit more reserved in their attitudes. Having left school and come in contact with realities, they discover to their consternation that there is a vast gulf between the ideals of "socialism, democracy, and humanism," and the society around them in which these ideals are supposed to be realised. At this stage a Marxist-Leninist education often turns out to be a mixed blessing; young men and women apply the rational and dialectical thinking they have been taught to their own surroundings, and usually the results are heretical, if not subversive.

And yet, in some respects, the effect of this education is incomparably more lasting than that of the Hitler Youth. They will almost certainly lose faith in the Ulbricht régime, but they will probably retain their belief in "a socialist order." They have little sympathy for the West German *Wirtschaftswunder* and its social climate. They think that their own "social services" are vastly superior, that everyone should have "equal opportunity in schools and universities." The West Germans, on the other hand, are not disposed to see any positive achievements at all in the East. The Ulbricht régime has made "socialism" a dirty word in West Germany. "When they hear the word socialism", a leading Social-democrat said to me the other day, they think of the *H.O.* [the state trading organisations which are a synonym for inefficient service, poor quality, high prices,

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limited selection.] Ulbricht has, in a way, made it impossible for the Social-Democrats to win a national election in West Germany, despite their transformation from a class party into a popular movement. The socialist colours are still red. I saw a statue in front of the Brandenburg Gate which is dedicated to "the victims of the *red* dictatorship."

East German Culture

THE differences between East Germany and the Soviet Union are probably most striking in the cultural field. In comparison with the shrill Goebbelesque vituperations of *Neues Deutschland*, *Izvestya* reads like a paper edited by a group of tolerant and liberal elder statesmen. *Sonntag*, which used to be the only readable East German weekly, recently published the results of an enquiry: "What is holding up the creative work of our artists and writers?" It mentions all kinds of reasons except the decisive one: that there simply is not that essential minimum of freedom in East Germany. It is highly dissatisfied with the misplaced liberalism of some neighbouring countries—Polish writers have scarcely been translated during the last five years; and even Czech writers come in for strong criticism. One of the more daring Soviet films was cut by forty minutes for its performance in East Germany. I found very revealing the attack by Alfred Kurella (the East German Zhdanov) on Ilya Fradkin, a Soviet critic who, in an essay published in East Berlin, had outlined the new tasks of the Soviet writers: not to embellish life, not to gloss over the bad effects of the "cult of personality," but to be truthful. All this was thought to be very dangerous in East Berlin and Kurella stepped in. If Kurella were an ignorant and insensitive hack, it would be easier to explain the affair. But he is an educated man, well versed in Russian, German, and French literature. For many years he was under a cloud and escaped arrest in the Soviet Union only by retiring as a language teacher to a little town far from Moscow. His brother, Heinrich, was arrested and never came back from the camp; Kurella himself was permitted to return to Germany only ten years after the end of the war. And yet, after that, he seems to be content to carry out Ulbricht's cultural policies, adding some petty and irritating restrictions of his own.

Russia in West German Eyes

COMING FROM LONDON, one dislikes the strident tone, the intransigent approach prevailing in West Germany; the cold war is always a few degrees cooler there. Gradually one realises that it is essentially a reaction to enormous pressures. Talking to some German Sovietologists, I get the impression that nothing has changed or is likely to change in the Soviet bloc. A professor at Berlin's Free University observes, at the end of a long treatise on Soviet foreign policy, that bourgeois governments which project their own pragmatic attitudes on to Soviet policy are most likely to misinterpret Soviet motives: "Britain with its pragmatic standards in the appraisal of Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Communist China is a perfect illustration. . . ." This may be so, but is Germany the ideal observation point for Soviet bloc developments? Whatever happens beyond the Curtain is obscured for the Germans by events in "the Zone." They say Khrushchev and mean Ulbricht. Ten years ago this did not greatly matter, for conditions throughout the Soviet bloc were more or less alike. Since then "polycentric trends" have emerged, and there are now considerable differences between the various communist states. Some have carried de-Stalinisation fairly far; Ulbricht has marked time. He had his good reasons: the more popular dissatisfaction there is, the more dangerous it is to relax controls. Ulbricht conceivably told Khrushchev that de-Stalinisation may be all very well in Russia and even Bulgaria, but that in the "front line of imperialist aggression" one could not possibly engage in experiments which might lead to explosions (as in June, 1953, or October, 1956). The West Germans have been looking fixedly at East Germany where nothing much has happened since the last Soviet party congress (apart from an Ulbricht speech of some 35,000 words). Preoccupied with the state of affairs in East Germany, West Germany seems unaware that elsewhere in the Soviet bloc important developments have taken place.

Germany & Marxism

OF ALL THE EUROPEAN NATIONS the Germans have the longest record of speculation about Russia. It began in the 16th century, when travellers, philosophers, and theologians debated whether Moscow was with or without "the true knowledge of God," whether it was the last piece of Europe looking Eastward, or the beginning of that barbarous East which constantly threatened the West. Romantic pro-Polish enthusiasm in the late eighteenth century caused much anti-Russian feeling, but the aristocracy expected that the old order would be saved by intervention from the East. In the nineteenth century speculation about the "European destiny of Russia" became something of a national sport. After 1917, too, Germany remained the leading country for Soviet studies,

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but 1933 put an end to all that: according to Hitler and Rosenberg, there was no Soviet ideology, only a "Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy" to dominate the world. As a German historian subsequently wrote: "The intellectual discussion of Marxism was rejected as superfluous and even dangerous.... When the war ended in 1945 many Germans knew scarcely anything of Marx except the name and that he was a Jew." In the post-war period Marxism became *Soviet* Marxism, Ulbricht's ideology, and it did not thereby become a promising subject for dispassionate enquiry. True, some Protestant and Catholic clergymen have made a brave effort to discuss Marxism *sine ira et studio*, but it has been very abstract indeed—*entfremdung* (alienation) and all that. We owe to them some good textbooks and stimulating debates (Professor Wetter's *Dialectical Materialism*; the Protestant *Marxismus-Studien*). But this hardly ever filtered down to those trying to analyse current Soviet policies. As far as the impact of ideology on Soviet policy is concerned, most German students of Soviet affairs are as much at sea as the rest of the world, only more so.

Berlin's Future

LIKE EVERY MAJOR CRISIS, the Berlin problem is embedded in broad layers of misconception and illusion. The most common in Britain is the assumption that Berlin is somehow the cause—not the result—of West-East tension. From which it follows that a "reasonable compromise"—which could easily be reached if only the Germans were not so stubborn—would bring about a lasting détente. It is very disheartening at this late hour to come across such elementary misunderstandings about cause and effect in the present world situation.

To be sure, in West Germany both government and opposition have their own private myths. According to the governmental version, it will be possible to pursue the present policy of the non-recognition of the DDR and the Oder-Neisse line indefinitely, and all else that is involved—e.g., the so-called Hallstein doctrine, according to which Bonn is obliged to break off relations with any country extending diplomatic recognition to the DDR. The Opposition, on the other hand, often claims that "the German question (including Berlin) could have been solved in March 1952" (they refer to some ambiguous statements by Stalin and Grotewohl at the time). If only Germany had followed "a national policy" instead of "blindly obeying the West"! I would not want to deny that Stalin in his last years was no longer responsible for his actions and there is no telling what he might have done. Yet, everything considered, a careful analysis of the situation in 1952 makes it clear that there is no basis whatsoever for the political myth.

Some Western observers (Allsop and Lippmann, among others) argued last autumn that the erection of the Wall was actually "a positive step," conducive to lessening of tension; they ascribed to the Communists a defensive mentality which, unfortunately, has yet to be exhibited. The wall was urgently needed to stop the mass exodus from East Germany. But it was at the same time an important *offensive* step; as the recurrent incidents have shown, it has by no means reduced tension. On the contrary, a dangerous new source of conflict has come into being.

Others argue that the Communist demand that West Berlin cease to be "a centre of Western agents and cold war propaganda" is not unreasonable. But since the wall went up "Western agents" which, in Communist parlance, does not just mean Mr. Allan Dulles and his successor, but everybody who is not a Communist, have been unable to reach the DDR except by broadcasts; it would not make the slightest difference if the radio stations were moved 150 miles to the west.

The Communists could not, of course, care less whether RIAS and *Radio Freies Berlin* broadcast in future from West Berlin or from Hannover; their designs are most ambitious. They have pursued their offensive cautiously so far;

TEMPO PRESENTE

Rivista mensile

Direttori
NICOLA CHIAROMONTE e
IGNAZIO SILONE

*

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it began three-and-a-half years ago (on November 27, 1958, to be precise) and they have since pressed home their programme patiently though relentlessly. Khrushchev is not unreasonable—he is willing to give the West time to surrender—he fully understands that some psychological readjustment is involved. But Khrushchev may not be able to wait indefinitely; he has been under fire from some comrades within his own camp. There have been certain setbacks (the agricultural front and elsewhere), and he may feel obliged to bring stronger pressure to bear on the West. There is little the West could or should do (as Richard Lowenthal has shown in these pages) to help Khrushchev to find a way out of a crisis that is of his own making. The Soviet leaders *seem* to realise (quite correctly) that while they may bring about a Western surrender over Berlin following an ultimatum, such a chain of events would lead at the next world crisis with near-certainty to nuclear war. The most disturbing and complicating factors in these circumstances is, on the one hand, Ulbricht (who may try to convince the Soviet leader that his régime is doomed unless the East gets Berlin), and on the other some well-meaning but short-sighted Western "partisans of peace" who indirectly encourage the Russians to take an aggressive line on Berlin. So far the Soviet leaders have wisely resisted these temptations and one ought to be grateful for their good sense in realising that the stakes are too high. As good chess players, they try to think several moves ahead. Unfortunately, there is no telling what inner tensions may be generated in the Soviet bloc and what their consequences may be.

If that were all, the outlook would be bleak. But the Soviet leaders make *world* politics these days; they see not only Ulbricht but also Modibo Keita, Sukarno, and a great many others. They know that the frontier between East and West in Europe has been frozen for a long time; even if they were to get a "neutral Berlin" it would take them a long time to incorporate the city into the DDR. The gain in substance would be small, the gain in prestige not much larger, and all this at very considerable risk. By contrast, the situation in some of the underdeveloped countries seems much more promising. There everything is, as yet, in flux; anything can happen. There are, in fact definite signs of a more militant Soviet line in the *tiers monde* (*vide* Khrushchev's recent speech in Sofia and many articles in the Soviet ideological magazines, including last month's *Kommunist.*)

WHICH TAKES ONE FAR AFIELD from the grey brick walls of Bernauer Strasse. This is still a good vantage point from which to watch the clash of East and West in Central Europe; it is less well suited for tracing Eurasian developments. And are the Russians themselves truly "expert on the East" as they fancy themselves? Stalin used to say: "You Westerners don't understand the Asians." Ivan Maisky, former ambassador to the court of St. James and now a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences states in a contribution to last month's *Voprosy Istorii:* "The only conclusion that can be drawn from our analysis is that Jengiz Khan's entire activity did much harm to the cause of human progress. Such is the final conclusion from the point of view of Marxist-Leninist science." Some Westerners, we are reliably told, held this point of view for a long time—possibly even before Marx was born. And what are the Leninist historians in Peking writing about traditional Asian expansiveness over Neutrals?

Red Square, next month, may be a better place for meditation on these topics.

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Life & Letters Today

London

INDIA *is not commonly thought of as a book-banning country, so it comes as a surprise that Mr. Arthur Koestler's book on Asia, "The Lotus and the Robot," should have been prohibited from import by the Home Ministry in New Delhi while the Ministry examines it for possible "anti-Indian" tendencies. The book, which included a root and branch attack on some kinds of "Indian wisdom," especially yoga, brought Mr. Koestler "mostly abuse" from readers there, though "a few very thoughtful Indians," he says, took it more calmly.*

A spokesman for the Indian High Commission explained to-night that the Home Ministry has legal authority to ban "any kind of literature considered derogatory to the State in any way or bad from the security point of view," though it is seldom used (some of the states have used similar powers to keep out Chinese propaganda). The spokesman did not know the details but thought the trouble might be Mr. Koestler's "very derogatory references to Mahatma Gandhi." The odd thing is that the book has been out for eighteen months and has probably reached most of the Indians who were likely to read it. THE GUARDIAN

New York

Two *foreign words that one might expect to find in the new* Webster's International Dictionary *were left out because of insufficient "backing"; i.e., the compilers didn't find enough usages to justify inclusion. They were* Achtung *and* Niet. *The researchers must have skipped spy movies and Molotovian diplomacy.*

THE NEW YORKER

London

Two *fascinating books were being written at about the same time by German Jews established in Victorian London: The Rothschild bankbook and* "Das Kapital." *Between them, the balance has yet to be struck. But Marx has already added a mocking footnote to Meyer Rothschild's ledger: one of the former Rothschild mansions in Kensington Gardens is now the Soviet Embassy.*

THE REPORTER

Capetown

THE MINISTER *of the Interior said to-day that through a departmental oversight a Government notice banning a book by Miss Nadine Gordimer, the South African author, did not make clear that the ban applied only to the soft-cover edition. The book,* A World of Strangers, *has been on the market for two years and has just been published as a paper-back.*

The secretary of the South African P.E.N. yesterday urged the Minister to reconsider the ban. "Has South Africa accepted a differential censorship which discriminates between classes of readers on that least defensible of all controls —price?" she asked. THE TIMES

Rome

THE ATTITUDE *of the Italian liberals to Prime Minister Fanfani's "apertura a sinistra" has now been stated with full flowery literary embellishment in a speech in the Chamber. Former Foreign Minister Martino had to express sympathy for Fanfani who now stood there "like Dürer's Knight between Death and the Devil.... What will be his fate—the death of his party or the victory of the devil in Italy?" Both were undesirable, but he had to think about paraphrasing a remark of Luther's and he continued in German: "Dort also stehst du und du kannst nicht anders—möge Gott dir helfen!" As Fanfani began shaking his head, Martino continued in Latin, citing Psalms 41.8: "Abyssus abyssum invocat." Martino went on to call Fanfani's attention to the words of Aeneas in Virgil, when Achilles' bloody shadow appears in a dream: "Oh what a change was there!" From the left side of the house came a cry: "Oh unlucky one with an evil eye!" Fanfani took out a little ivory elephant, his amulet, as is customary in Italy when death and the devil are invoked....*

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

Nairobi

KENYA *officials who are responsible for the Africanisation of the Civil Service are searching the rather thin ranks of Kenya's African graduates for suitable candidates to fill the senior posts in government service after independence. The search is taking place in a curiously haphazard way.... The students in the administrative courses are a mixed crowd. In the present course there are middle-aged men with years of service in the junior ranks of the administration, side by side with young Kikuyu graduates, fresh from Makerere College. There is among them a Masai tribesman who reads Shakespeare to himself while tending his cattle.* THE TIMES

Havana

FIDEL CASTRO, *in a speech on the fifth anniversary of the storming of the Batista palace, protested the omission from the testament of Jose Antonio Echevarria, who fell in that uprising, of his dying statement, "We are confident that the purity of our intentions will bring us the favour of God and make justice prevail in our homeland". Castro went on to say: "What is the revolution being converted to? Into a group of tame minds!... Revolution must make men think, analyze and maintain deep convictions, convictions so deep that there will be no need of things like these!... How can we, before a new generation, a generation thirsty for knowledge, how can we put blinders on them so they cannot read the complete texts of the historic documents of a revolutionary comrade?"*

STONE'S WEEKLY

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Moravia's Boredom

By Nicola Chiaromonte

LET US HEAR what Moravia has to say about *noia*, the fundamental, immovable situation of all his books, in his recent novel *The Empty Canvas* (*La Noia*) where for the first time he deals with it explicitly. (In his English version, Angus Davidson translates the word by "boredom.")

> For me... boredom is not the opposite of amusement; I might even go so far as to say that in certain of its aspects it actually resembles amusement inasmuch as it in fact gives rise to distraction and forgetfulness, even if of a very special type. Boredom, to me, consists, to be precise, in a kind of insufficiency or inadequacy or lack of reality. Reality, when I am bored, has always had the same disconcerting effect on me as (to make use of a metaphor) a too-short blanket has upon a sleeping man, on a winter night: he pulls it down over his feet and his chest gets cold, then he pulls it up on his chest and his feet get cold; and so he never succeeds in falling properly asleep. Or again (to make use of a different comparison) my boredom resembles a repeated and mysterious interruption of the electric current inside a house: at one moment everything is clear and obvious—here are armchairs, over there are sofas, beyond are cupboards, sidetables, pictures, curtains, carpets, windows, doors; a moment later there is nothing but darkness and an empty void. Yet again (a third comparison) my boredom might be described as a malady affecting external objects and consisting of a withering process, of an almost instantaneous loss of vitality—just as though one saw a flower change in a few seconds, by a series of extremely rapid transformations, from a bud to decay and dust.... I closely resembled, in relation to myself, some individual, for various reasons intolerable, who is found by a traveller in his own railway carriage at the beginning of a long journey. The carriage is of the old-fashioned kind, without any communication with the other carriages; the train is not going to stop until the end of the journey; and so the traveller is forced to remain with his hateful companion without hope of escape.... The main feature of my boredom was the practical impossibility of remaining in my own company—I myself being, moreover, the only person in the world whom I could not get rid of in any possible way.

This state of mind is the same as the one Moravia called "indifference" in his first novel. But this indifference was directed, not so much towards reality in general, as towards other people. It was the incapacity of a young man to share the feelings, passions, and wishes that seem to give other people reasons to act, reasons which, if not valid, are at least clear and straightforward; and with this incapacity went a feeling of great sadness, and a sense of guilt that was all the more depressing because it was based on nothing very definite. The *noia* of the protagonist of *The Empty Canvas* is, if you like, indifference extended to everything real, to objects singly and collectively, starting with the most tormenting object of them all, oneself, and ending with the most abstract and omnipresent, the world, in which people and things should have some sort of order and explanation but in fact only reflect, in endlessly multiplied images, a similar meaninglessness.

I have said "state of mind." But *noia* understood in this way cannot be called a state of mind in the sense that listlessness or cheerfulness are states of mind. In the first place, since Moravia's *noia* is defined as being the very absence and negation of any particular state of mind, it makes sorrow and joy equally impossible, and, as Moravia is careful to point out, eliminates *noia* itself in the sense of what we feel when things seem empty and colourless; when we are not amused or stimulated. In the second place, a man's state of mind is a mood or psychic condition that is caused by a specific situation and so is recognised as transitory at the very moment in which it is suffered (or enjoyed). Or it may even have no reason at all,

* *The Empty Canvas*. By ALBERTO MORAVIA. Secker & Warburg, 18s.

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but in that case it will be all the more changeable and momentary. Besides, just because it is essentially so transitory, a state of mind is something purely subjective: a change of oneself, not of the real world. Whereas Moravia's *noia* is an inner condition, at once persistent and unmotivated, which, apart from removing the possibility of feeling varied changeable states of mind, infects the outside world as well, and makes it depressing or inadequate not because of this or that particular deficiency but taken as a whole, and, almost, everlastingly.

HERE WE PASS from the physical (and from naturalistic psychology) to the metaphysical: that is, to a place where we have, instead of the observing and describing of facts, the single obsessing question of the relationship between the individual and external things, a relationship that seems to have been shattered, and where, too, the image of the world as the source of events that are more or less happy, more or less sad, or more or less remarkable, is replaced by a sense of the unbearable weight and opacity of the world itself, and of one's existence in it. The world and what happens there seem an endless repetition of nonsense, and our own existence in it a lumpish, unshakeable fact against which we rage, in an effort to understand it. Or rather, there is nothing to understand, but we cannot help raging against it.

Moravia's *noia* is this situation of rage: a pointless rage, perhaps, but no less stubborn for that, and no less revealing in its stubbornness. It is a situation that involves the whole mind, not just the feelings; and not just the reason, either. Feelings do not show us the way the world fails to satisfy our consciousness, and *vice versa*; but neither does reason, which gives us only the facts, in a logical order. Moravia's *noia* is not a simple state of mind, or a fact you can reason about, or a particular effect of a particular cause; it is a condition of being, linked to a certain situation in the world.

A condition of being is one in which, on the one hand, the person is wholly and permanently possessed by a dominant feeling or thought; while on the other hand, simply because he is so wholly steeped in it, involved with it, he is reduced to pure, empty consciousness of it: forced into this consciousness, you might say. And it is a pointless sort of consciousness, since it can in no way resist the passion that absorbs it and makes everyday living quite automatic. This, which is true of sensual passion and of the longing for possession, is all the more true of a negative passion like *noia*, which makes the facts of existence into nothing but a series of proofs of pointlessness and lack of meaning.

Heidegger's reasoning on the subject of this same *noia* (in his essay *What is Metaphysics?*) is very much to the point here. According to him, our first and most elementary experience of the world is that of its everyday banality, in which things appear one beside the other, one after the other and all together, without giving us any composite reason for their being there. Thus experienced, the world seems clear, whereas in fact it is opaque; it seems to make up a whole, whereas in fact it only presents us with a collection of objects and facts; it seems to have a meaning, whereas in fact all it does is lead us stupidly back to itself and to the objects it consists of. This is metaphysical *noia*, which, Heidegger says, "brings men and external things together, and brings us and other people and things together, with a stupefying degree of indifference"—which is the way we get our first revelation of being, or rather of the fact that existence is a total situation not to be solved on the plane of the everyday, or of what has already happened, but requiring the intervention of human freedom.

IF WE TAKE Heidegger's words as a metaphor, or as a kind of myth, you might say that in a way all Moravia's writing is born and develops from the decision to accept the condition of *noia* as a matter of fact. It *stops short* at *noia*, and believes nothing else that is revealed; so that all it does is say and say again that the everyday world, the so-called natural and normal world that most people are content to consider the ultimate reality, is indeed such, and we have been given no other; but is a dreary world as well, a *dead* world in the full meaning of the word, a world that cuts us off from reality instead of putting us in touch with it.

Moravia's novels and stories are tales of this dead world. They are not naturalistic or even realistic narratives. Over and over again they exemplify the unbearable reality of this dead world, that is of a world in which consciousness is both awake and inert. In this sense, Moravia's realism is purely moral; it describes, not things and events, but the negative impression they make on our consciousness; their obstinate denial by consciousness, the way in which consciousness stoically rejects them and keeps them at a distance. Although the world is dead and the actions and objects it consists of are inert, the consciousness that describes them is awake and intelligent, so that it undergoes events without accepting them, asserting its own energy and strength in the way it describes them. This is why Moravia's stories, based as they are on a

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situation of *noia* or nonsense, when they are successful (and the more they concentrate on a simple fact, without spreading out into a complex plot, the more successful they are), are anything but depressing and pessimistic. On the contrary, in their essential nastiness they are encouraging and bracing: bracing for the mind and consciousness, of course, not for the senses; since they deal with facts that are to be understood, not enjoyed. Taken as naturalistic or realistic stories (and unfortunately Moravia often poses as a "realist"), they are inevitably depressing. In fact, they are plainly written with the intention of flaying a particular kind of moral passivity, sensuality, sentimentality, and æstheticism. They are actually directed against the whole Italian tradition of agreeable, ornate, highflown writing.

So what Moravia's realism really comes down to is a repetitive, almost demented clash between consciousness and the banality of facts: a monotonous clash that is an end in itself, without catharsis. What Moravia is actually describing over and over again in the detailed treatment of facts is the insufficiency (the "too-short blanket") of the real. Thus it is inevitable that each time from the start, it is the fact of consciousness that he presents to us, the gadfly consciousness at work. Therefore a book of his is, above all, an experience of truth, and not in the least a fable. There are dozens of writers capable of describing appearance and sensations more clearly or more attractively than Moravia. But no one can seize as he does the moments in which reality breaks through the fog of velleity and pretence and starts to exist, as it were, and to manifest its own overwhelming nature to us. These are the moments that show the certainty of a man who has plumbed the depths of his own experience and who, when he speaks, goes straight to the heart of the matter. It is then that Moravia manages to materialise—so to speak—the very essence of his own rage: to make discontent, depression, and anxiety spurt from a movement, a physical contact, a glance, or the most opaque piece of matter. It is this, not the "joy of story-telling," that gives the story its impetus, and it is towards this that the story moves. The plot is the "objective correlative" of this irremediable condition of the soul. It arises from the author's wish to cramp it into the context of a daily reality conceived as a "commonplace" of experience, and not from a desire to depict the progress of a real action in the continuity of real time.

The Empty Canvas seems to me a wonderfully concise, sharp, and powerful example of this fundamental and ever-repeated situation; and its moral and artistic economy possibly make it Moravia's most successful work.

High Gothic

'A delighted welcome must be given to this English translation by J. C. Palmes of Hans Jantzen's work . . . it should be read by all students of architecture and medieval history.' Times Literary Supplement. Illustrated, 25s.

Personal Experience 1939-1946

The quite exceptionally interesting and unusual records of Lord Casey, the distinguished Australian statesman, made during his wartime posts in Washington, Cairo and as Governor of Bengal. Illustrated, maps, 30s.

The Jewish Mind

By Gerald Abrahams. 'Always original and very stimulating.' The Guardian. 35s.

these books come from the publishers of

AUGUST 1914

CONSTABLE

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Its protagonist is an abstract painter who, one day, "as though at last, after so many feeble attempts, he had had at last a genuine inspiration," hurls himself on the painting he is working at and tears it to shreds with a knife: after which he feels free to start all over again, or else admit himself frankly a failure: "Certainly I had failed, but not because I was unable to paint pictures that other people liked; it was rather because I felt that my pictures did not permit me to express myself, in other words to deceive myself into imagining that I had some contact with external things."

Here, then, is a man facing a highly unpleasant truth, which, all the same, is very much better than an illusion. He is alone before the image of himself, "for various reasons intolerable," in an atonal world. He may do, or let himself go and do, anything at all. One day he makes a sign to a girl: "As she came below my window, I saw her raise her eyes in my direction, but this time without smiling. I lifted my hand to take the cigarette from my mouth, but instead of doing so I gave her a clear signal to turn back." This is how things happen, this is how we come to be caught in the mechanism of reality, Moravia seems to be saying.

This story takes its impetus from this involuntary gesture, which is at once gratuitous and compulsive. It is neither a love story nor an erotic story, since it turns on the frustrated longing for possession and knowledge. The relationship between the painter and the girl is bare, mechanical, as clean as a bone, or rather as a skeleton: a series of carnal acts, frenzied, cold, and automatic. Nudity, desire, and the venting of desire have never been described with such complete lack of complacence, with such impassive truthfulness as in this book. The point is that Moravia is not describing bodies nor their acts; he makes us feel their existence and at the same time their unreality: their refusal to be comprehended in their mechanicalness, their blind fatality. In the emptiness of *noia*, the triumph of physical love over every other vital impulse is represented with an annihilating force that recalls the triumph of death and decay over vanity and worldly pleasures in the frescoes of the Camposanto in Pisa:

> At the beginning it [physical love] had been a very natural thing... now, on the other hand, it struck me mainly by its lack of naturalness, as an act, in a sort of way, against nature, and therefore artificial and absurd. Walking, sitting, lying down, going upwards or downwards, all the actions of the body, in fact, now seemed to me to have a necessity of their own and therefore a naturalness; but copulation, on the contrary, seemed an extravagant exertion for which the human body was not made and to which it could not adapt itself without effort and fatigue. Everything, I felt, could be done easily, with grace and harmony—everything except copulation. The very conformation of the two organs, the female difficult of access, the male incapable of directing itself towards its goal, like an arm or a leg, but requiring to be aided by the whole body, appeared to me indicative of the absurdity of the sexual act....

Moravia does not say that this is love. He says that in the situation in which we find ourselves it would be dishonest to represent it in any other way. On the other hand, he seems to be also saying that in our present condition, sex, bereft as it is of any vibration of the spirit, is in fact a truth, the only way left us to reach nature. *Être la matière*: the last words of Flaubert's St. Anthony express the only form of mystical longing that modern man is capable of. This is not real hell: real hell lies in the unnecessary, in everything that hides us from ourselves by hiding the fact that we live in a world that is morally dead. This reality is described by Moravia with unequalled ferocity in the parts of the novel dealing with the relationship between the painter and his mother, and describing the luxury, the money, the empty words, the complete spiritual isolation of someone walled up by possessions and greed inside the deadliest of the passions: inert self-satisfaction. It is from places like the villa where this woman lives that *noia* floods out over the world.

88 Memories

Education and the Working Class. By Brian Jackson and Dennis Marsden. *Routledge & Kegan Paul*, 28s.

The theme and character of this "study of 88 working-class children in a northern industrial city" must be familiar by now to most readers of Encounter, for the book was well publicised before publication and widely reviewed thereafter. Sociology and education are two of the dominant interests of the day, and in conjunction they prove irresistible. On this occasion they have the added attraction of being presented as a human story with a minimum of statistical apparatus, a story, moreover, told in simple and unconstipated language (though occasionally the simplicity drops to the level of naïvety or rises to a pitch of hushed solemnity). At any rate, I am sure that this book deserves the praise it has received, though I am not sure

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that its particular contribution has been sufficiently appreciated.

Like many of the horses which run in Michael Young's colours (for this is a survey undertaken for the Institute of Community Studies), Jackson and Marsden are not thoroughbred sociologists. To orthodox judges of form, their style is liable to seem deplorably impressionistic. Discussing the difficulty of exploring "the individual human situations" of the 88 men and women into whom their sample of working-class children had grown, the authors say frankly that

> None of our tools of measurement or numerical analysis can hope to probe the depths: we can only chart the surface—and register, for what the reader finds it worth, the impressions received by that most delicate and yet irregular of instruments—the social observer himself.

As far as the study as a whole is concerned, this is to exaggerate the impression of superficiality. The analysis of these 88 children who succeeded in getting to grammar schools, stayed on to take A levels and who then, in very many cases, went to universities and training colleges and so passed up into professional and middle-class life: the raw facts of this story are clearly and revealingly presented. They confirm the now familiar findings of pioneer research-workers like Jean Floud and her colleagues, who have shown that academic success in secondary school is closely related to the social class of the parents and their attitude towards education. As Jackson and Marden put it, their studies lead them to suggest that

> behind the majority of the 88 children was a home where, for different reasons and in different ways, considerable pressure was put upon the children to do well, and so survive at school. This pressure may not have been quite as powerful as that behind the middle-class children . . . but it was strong enough both to encourage the child to accommodate himself to the new worlds he entered (if that was to be the price of survival), and to support him in the grammar school venture if the schools failed to recognise or meet the needs of working-class children.

Had the authors concluded their study at this stage, it would still have been unusually valuable, for they have been able to identify a number of ways in which the grammar school is liable unthinkingly to aggravate the difficulties of the working-class child—and they are, after all, themselves working-class boys from "Marburton" who passed through grammar schools at much the same time as the 88; indeed, they may have included themselves among the 88! Repeatedly the schools in Marburton failed to give their working-class parents the kind of in-

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formation they needed—about which subjects should best be dropped or taken up, about the monetary value of scholarships, about the very point of academic studies. They failed for lack of imagination; ready enough to answer questions, the teachers failed to realise that many, perhaps most, working-class parents could not know which questions to ask. The authors offer sensible suggestions for reducing difficulties of this pointless kind, including the excellent idea that schools should institute a parents' *week*, to give parents ample time to talk with the staff and formulate their questions and then, having thought about the answers, to come back to talk over their lingering uncertainties again.

If the argument and evidence up to this stage has followed (with acknowledgments) in the footsteps of Mrs. Floud and of the "Early Leaving" and Crowther reports, the authors' pursuit of the 88 into adult life, combined with their documentary-impressionistic methods, take one behind and beyond the statistics of social class and educational opportunity; and in the process they challenge the common and complacent view of social mobility. Thus if we are coming to accept the concept of *la famille éducogène*, Jackson and Marsden reveal something of the human complexity that is liable to remain concealed behind this neutral formulation. The father of one of the 88 children is speaking:

> I'd pick up a lot from home. Oh, there'd be lots to read there—not the kind of books you get at schooling like, but books that you wouldn't have heard of, books that would have been out of print a long time ago. Robert Blatchford's *Merry England*, William Morris' books, and books that made your flesh creep—about the jungle and the Pacific.... It's up to us to go out and take these jobs, to show that we can run the place as efficiently, better, more decently than the others have done. It's up to us to take our chances, to take Council places, to take this committee and that committee. It's up to us to let our children go to university like our Stanley did.
>
> When our Stanley was a lad, I'll tell you what —I wanted him to go into politics.... That's what I thought our Stanley could do. He could come back and take on responsibilities. You see, it's very saddening when these lads that's come from working-class life grow up and don't remember it. They ought to do something for it. They've got brains, they know how to make points. They know all the details. That's what we haven't got—the *details*. But it never seems to happen.

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN to Stanley either. He went through grammar school to Cambridge, one of the nine working-class children whom Marburton, with a population of 130,000, managed in a four-year period to send to Oxbridge. After university, Stanley didn't go into politics but became a time-and-motion officer, wavering between Liberalism and the right wing of the Labour party. If he remembered the working class, it was something remote or even alien: "In my last job I was supervising hundreds of girls, and they could gossip about nothing except all kinds of rubbish. Lord, I couldn't marry one of those. No chap in my position could." In fact, speaking of himself and the girl he did marry, he said: "Of course, there are lots of classes, but [my wife and I] aren't in any class."

This glimpse of the Bleasdales, father and son, may not provide a typical picture of social mobility, for the father is more idealistic and the son less insecure and pseudo-Established than many of those documented. But this contrast succeeds in revealing something of the complex pattern of parental ambition and encouragement coupled with the child's brains and knowledge of the "details": of disenfranchisement and disillusion; of professional success and yet, comparing one generation with the next, human impoverishment that is, in Mr. Bleasdale's words, "very saddening."

There were, of course, exceptions. Mr. Lucas, a bus driver who left school at 14, was "a man in whom large areas of curiosity, delight, and

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intelligence had lain dormant until his daughter passed the scholarship exam." He talked to the authors about his re-discovery of history and geography and geology as his daughter moved up the school. And then, when she went to college in London, he discovered music; including Britten:

> There's this here Royal Festival Hall in London that's one of the best places in the world for this here music, as I say it's only since our Mary's been going to school and college that I've ever thought about this. Last summer the wife and I went on a trip to London. We went to the British Museum. Now at one time that's the *last* place we'd have gone to, but I was filled with wonderment in that British Museum. . . .

As Jackson and Marsden comment, if few parents were roused in this lasting way, there were very few who were not touched in some degree. And yet, within a few years, a vast gulf had opened up between the generations in most instances. Asked about their grown-up professional children's jobs, many parents were hopelessly vague: "He's a 'second mathematician.' What's that, do you think? Will that be a good job?" or "I don't rightly know, he never mentions." Asked about their working-class parents, many of the grown-up children were resigned or even bitter: "It's when you come back you realise how narrow they are," or "The way our parents do things and look at things, the way they set about living—that's altogether foreign to us."

This break between the generations is in some degree inevitable, no doubt.* Commenting on Jackson's and Marsden's book, Mr. Harry Davies, headmaster of High Pavement School in Nottingham, argued (in *The Guardian*) that "the grammar school can hardly be blamed for the tensions which may arise when a working-class boy experiences an educa-

* An interesting parallel is to be found in the case of students from under-developed countries who go abroad for a period of university education and then return to their own countries. Dr. David Henry, in a recent address to the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers, quoted from an essay from a Tanganyikan Masai who is at a university in Britain:

> When I go home on leave now I find it difficult to associate with *morani* (warrior youths) of my own age. They cannot tolerate a half-Masai. All the same I understand their pride and I stick to them through thick and thin. When I go home I try to adjust myself to their way of thinking. It is also true that when I leave home and go back to school, I have again to adjust my way of thinking. And so it ends that I am destined to be between two worlds each of which has a hold on me. Will it always be so? I think it will.

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tion which is outside the range of his parents." And he went on: "The acute class-consciousness which afflicts the inhabitants of these islands, now becoming considerably overlaid, is neither the invention of the grammar school nor is it caused by its existence." This may well be true of many grammar schools; but it is not true, one would deduce, of Marburton's grammar schools in 1950, nor of the many schools whose social snobberies were unwittingly documented by Frances Stevens in her recent book on the grammar school. Created in the class image of the public schools and providing an ever-increasing number of working-class children with the means of escaping from the "narrowness" of their parents' lives, most grammar schools are clearly substituting one form of class-consciousness for another and, in the process, creating what become class tensions.

But the most "saddening" problem of all is the one hinted at by Mr. Bleasdale, which is not so much the speed and superficial thoroughness of social mobility via education, as its devitalising effect. Wholly unlike the working-class products of Ruskin, who retain their affiliations and then, in so many cases, "come back and take on the responsibilities," the Marburton working-class boys and girls grow into disenfranchised semi-detached professionals, many of them "rigidly orthodox citizens, who wish to preserve a hierarchical society," seldom showing any interest in serious literature or art or music, and as many as a third of them dissatisfied with their work and position in society. If these Marburton men and women are a fair illustration, is one compelled to conclude that this is only the inevitable short-term consequence of mobility? Are the strains and the uneasy orthodoxy a characteristic only of the first-generation *nouveaux riches* of education?

It seems unlikely. For though the children of the 88 will have far less social travelling ahead of them, they will not be likely to "pick up a lot from home" nor, apparently, will there be "lots to read there." The next generation will grow up in homes lacking the assured values, however narrow, of their grandparents' homes; they will stand a good chance of going to grammar schools and being taught by people who have the comparative lack of assurance of their parents (over half of the 88 became teachers, as it happens). And an insecure teacher is a teacher who "hands on" traditions instead of revitalising them, and who leans heavily on textbooks and external examinations.

The relevance of this is that Jackson and Marsden suggest that the human plight of the young adults they finally met may be the outcome of the intellectual as much as of the social régime through which they went at school. Picked out in the first place by devices which test facility and cleverness, these working-class children came inevitably to measure success in the only unassailably measurable terms, which is *O* and *A* level scores. Mr. Davies may write that the grammar school's duty is to be

> creative, in that it develops good taste and discrimination, judgment, a conception of personal responsibility. It must transmit our cultural heritage in art, literature, politics, and religion, and, at the same time, encourage an openness to new ideas and developments in a rapidly changing world.

These are fine aspirations, and they could do much to help working-class children develop fuller sympathies as they grow into adults of whatever class. But to-day the "rat race" is against the Harry Davieses of the grammar-school world: the increasing pressure of sixth formers to win a handful of university places means that the *A* and *S* levels of the G.C.E. count for more and more. This year the qualifying mark may be 60% in 2 papers; next year it may be 60% in 3 papers; the year after that it may be 65% in 1 and 60% in 2 papers. If this is the kind of calculable task which many working-class children will be compelled to master as efficiently as middle-class children, it seems highly pertinent to ask, with Jackson and Marsden, "How far should education be concerned with shaping the intellect, and how far should it be concerned with training the quality of emotional response?" And the reason for asking this question is because it may be that the first is "ultimately dependent on the second when the full stress of adult life has to be met."

THE SOCIOLOGY OF the classroom and of the studies that go on within it, of the content and assumptions of external exams, is virtually unstudied in this country. It is significant that Jackson, who raises these queries, was trained in the evaluative school of English Literature and not in the analytical-statistical school of the Social Sciences. My only regret, and I think it may amount to a serious matter, is that he and Marsden did not pursue these questions more fully, and that they did not anatomise in detail the social and intellectual life of the grammar schools of Marburton. This central piece of evidence is missing, and to be given the 88's memories of school is no substitute. Mr. Bleasdale may well have said something more significant than he realised when, speaking of the "saddening" fact that these working-class lads forget their origins, he added that "They've got brains, they know how to make points. They know all the details." In spite of Harry Davies, that just about sums up what far too many grammar schools are content to do for their

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pupils. For brains plus details plus fluency equal good exam results. But they seldom equal maturity, or compassion, or a willingness to "come back and take on the responsibilities."

Boris Ford

Galton on Genius

Hereditary Genius. By FRANCIS GALTON. *The Fontana Press*, 8s. 6d.

IT WAS in 1869 that Francis Galton first published this book, and it is most satisfactory that it should now be re-issued 50 years after his death. There is an introductory chapter by Professor C. D. Darlington, which among other things explains how the understanding of the subject has been changed by the modern developments in genetic theory.

In a quite exceptionally versatile career Galton covered a vast range of subjects. As a young man he travelled in a remote part of South-west Africa years before African exploration had become fashionable. He made important contributions to meteorology, and indeed it is to him that we owe the word "anticyclone." He developed the study of finger-prints and made it practical for the detection of criminals; the difficulty is not of course the recognition that our prints are individual to each of us, but the way in which a "dictionary" can be compiled, so that the re-identification of a finger-print becomes quick and easy. He was also a mathematician, and he was the first man to apply the Theory of Errors to biology. This is the basic idea in the present work, and it is perhaps his greatest contribution to the advancement of knowledge. It was the start of the subject of eugenics, for which he is now best remembered.

The book was written under the stimulus of the *Origin of Species*, which had been published only a few years before by his cousin, and its aim was to extend to humanity the principle of evolution by natural selection which Darwin had as yet only applied to the animal and vegetable kingdoms. This he had done deliberately, perhaps mainly so as to avoid getting into useless controversies, but he warmly welcomed the present work, and indeed it was at least partly under its stimulus that two years later he published the *Descent of Man*.

Galton uses the word *genius* to include all people of rather exceptional ability, and a main point in the work is that it shows how it is possible to get valuable results from the study of exceptional cases, and not merely from general averages. He was able to verify that heredity plays a conspicuous part in the development of ability. In those days the laws of heredity were practically unknown, though of course there was a general acceptance of the idea that children were likely to resemble their parents. Everybody agreed that this was so for animals, as witnessed by the work of animal breeders, but for humanity there was still a tendency to think that a child's intellectual character was entirely due to conscious parental influences. Galton evidently hoped not merely to verify that heredity played a great part in mental as well as in physical characters, but he also had the hope of discovering some of the general laws of heredity through this statistical analysis. In his introduction, Darlington explains how things have been changed by Mendel's theory of genetics and its later extensions; but from the point of view of the history of science it is most impressive to see what a lot Galton could derive without the modern theory.

He begins by explaining the sort of level of ability he is thinking about. He uses the terms *eminent* and *illustrious* to describe two such levels. An eminent man is about one in four thousand of the general population, and an

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illustrious man is one in a million or even more. Thus there would now be something like ten thousand eminent men in England, and forty or less illustrious ones, but with the smaller populations of the periods which he analyses the numbers would be only a fifth or a tenth of these.

He is very conscious that he must be on his guard in his selection of names for consideration, because it would be so easy to pick the favourable cases and omit the others, and for this reason where possible he uses biographical dictionaries already compiled by other writers. In deciding what shall constitute eminence he follows the easy course of using general reputation, but he makes a good case for justifying this course. He claims that to attain eminence a man must have three qualities which do not by any means always go together: intellect, zeal, and the power of hard work. Though some admirers may value one of the three at the expense of the other two, all three are essential to achieve eminence, and this justifies reputation as the guide for his choices.

The amount of labour he went through in examining the biographies must have been prodigious. He took for his first type the judges of the English Courts of Law, because a man must have at least achieved some degree of eminence to be raised to the bench, and he had a book (Foss's *Lives of the Judges*) which gave accounts of 286 judges between 1660 and 1865. The results were unmistakable. Nearly half of them had at least one relation of some distinction and many had several. As a result of all this labour he gives as a summary that for 100 men of this level there would be about 26 eminent fathers, 36 eminent sons, 23 eminent brothers, and there would be a good many eminent collateral relations too, but the numbers decrease with the distance of kinship. All this is in great contrast to the number of eminent relations that an average member of the population could claim.

He next applies similar tests to other professions—statesmen, the peerage, military commanders, writers, scientists, artists of various kinds, divines; and so as to get a comparison with physical qualities he takes also two types of athletes, the oarsmen and the wrestlers of the North of England, for whom he could get family records. In all these cases he gets broadly similar answers, with near relations of distinction occurring in roughly the frequencies he had found for the judges, so that he could conclude he had found a general law.

All these facts are given in elaborate tables and appendices, which few people will now want to study in detail, but it should be said that he makes the subject much more readable than might be expected by mentioning things about the lives and personalities of the people given in the appendices. An example of this enlivening of the text may be quoted.

His study of commanders starts with Alexander the Great, and ends with Wellington, and he makes one special point where they may be expected to differ from other illustrious people. As a young man a future commander will have been often in action, and if he is a small man he will make a smaller target for the enemy's bullets. He specially cites the case of Nelson who was a small man. By Nelson's own estimate he had been in action 120 times, and we know that in those actions he lost an eye and an arm. Galton calculates that, if he had been 6 ft. 2 in. tall instead of 5 ft. 6 in., his chance of surviving in each of these actions would have been reduced by a third. After such a large number of exposures it thus becomes practically certain that if he had been a tall man he would have been killed long before Trafalgar!

In his chapter on statesmen Galton had the ill fortune to miss the name of one family that would certainly have delighted him. This is the family of Villiers, described in an excellent book, Paul Bloomfield's *Uncommon People*. They derive from Sir George Villiers the father of the famous first Duke of Buckingham, and frankly many of the family had unattractive characters, but they have contrived to play a most important part in our politics ever since. Thus the office of prime minister only came into existence in the 18th century, but of a total of 44 prime ministers between then and now, 14 are descended from Sir George Villiers. How pleased Galton would have been if he had detected this man!

Turning now to the general conclusions of the book, since the laws of genetics were unknown in those days, there was no knowing whether a man was more likely to inherit ability from his father or his mother, whereas we now know that he is equally likely to get all his main qualities from either of them. Galton notes that his earliest analyses of men's qualities gave the balance heavily against the female side, but he gradually changed his mind. He recognised that biographers have much greater trouble in tracing female relationships than male ones on account of the changes of surname, and he concluded in the end that "the influence of the females was but little inferior to the males." This was in 1869, nearly fifty years before the equality of the two inheritances was established.

Two instances may be cited leading towards Galton's views on eugenics. One is the chapter on the peerage. He notes that when an eminent man is made a peer, it is very likely that he will

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set up his family by marrying an heiress. Now an heiress is an only child, and this suggests that her parents were likely to have been rather infertile, and she is likely to have inherited the same tendency, and to pass it on to her own offspring. From his detailed study of *Burke's Peerage* Galton concludes that the families of peers have tended to die out distinctly more often than the families of other men of eminence who had not been given this promotion.

The second instance is a most interesting discussion of the indirect influence of religion on the perpetuation of human qualities. During at least the first sixteen centuries of the Christian era anyone who had a kindly, benevolent disposition was extremely likely to go into the church, and so become celibate. On the other hand, intelligent men who liked to think for themselves very frequently would be classed as "heretics," and all too often they would pay for it by being burnt at the stake. He gives figures showing what a great number of people were punished for their heresy. There would thus for centuries have been a continual tendency to eliminate these two valuable qualities in so far as they are inherited, and Galton had proved that in large measure they would be inherited. He expresses surprise that we do seem to have recovered to a great extent from these brutalising tendencies. Incidentally in another chapter there is a most interesting review of the differences between the characters of divines and of philosophic free-thinkers, which is well worth study for its own sake.

At the end of the book there is a consideration of the differences between the various races of mankind. From his African travels Galton had no doubt of the superiority of the European over the Negro, and he reckoned that in the long run natural selection would ensure that the "inferior" races would be eliminated by the "superior." Indeed he cites the case of the North American Indians, where this has very nearly happened already. This subject is of course very much alive now, but unfortunately on a political rather than a scientific basis. Thus it is nearly blasphemy for a Marxist to admit that there *may* be racial differences, and the same holds for many old-fashioned liberals. General equality is a reasonable political tenet, suitable for the Council of the United Nations, but this is quite a different thing from regarding it as an established scientific fact. We can all see great differences between the members of our own society, and we can see what a small fraction of them could ever aspire to Galton's *eminent* level. It seems hardly credible that the same differences should not be found in the other races, and it is unlikely that the level of their eminent people measured in any selected quality should

What should the West do about China now?

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be exactly the same. In some they may well be better, but in others not so good. The scientific psychologists do not appear to have yet reached any unanimity on the subject, but when there are so many obvious physical differences between the races it seems at least improbable that Galton's *éminence* should be distributed to an exactly even degree among them all. However this subject is still *sub judice*.

It is obviously impossible in a review to touch on more than a fraction of the interesting branches of the subject, but it is to be hoped that this book, so long out of print, will attract many readers now that it has become available again.

Charles Darwin

Shorter Notices

The Complete Tales of Henry James. Vols. 1 and 2. *Hart-Davis*, 35s.

THESE two volumes (in a planned set of 12) contain the first 19 of James' 112 short stories. The more interesting of them reveal the effect of two important experiences in James' life—living through the Civil War as a non-combatant, and his first exposure to the dazzling riches and historic associations of Europe. In manner they are both tentative and assured. Tentative in that they show a young writer trying to free himself of the restrictive formulæ of genteel romance and morbid melodrama—assured in the sense they give of a writer confidently defining his own area of interest and refining his craft to the point where he can work on the reader with subtle incisiveness.

Certain stories interestingly anticipate themes and situations in his later, deeper work. *The Story of a Masterpiece*, like that sombre late work *The Liar*, centres on a painting which reveals the abysmal hidden truth of a charming social personality. *The Romance of Certain Old Clothes* shows James' early predilection for the ghostly: as in *Turn of the Screw* we see the dead working horrible effects on the living. *De Grey: A Romance* is an early sounding for *The Sacred Fount* for here already James is developing his idea that people live off each other, blooming or withering at one another's expense. The situation in *Travelling Companions*—a rich, sensitive American girl left alone in "the scintillating darkness" of Venice—despite its happy ending contains the seed of *Wings of a Dove*, and *A Passionate Pilgrim* centres on a young American's first visit to England in a way which foreshadows James' last work *The Sense of the Past*. One should always remember that if many Jamesian characters seem to be liberated and enhanced by Europe they are often trapped by it, sometimes fatally.

There are other stories which show James trying —and not always succeeding—to find a suitably challenging subject in his own American scene. And nearly all of them reveal some rare stroke of the man who was to be one of the great masters of the modern novel. There is a good introduction by Leon Edel. The volumes are indispensable to all those at all interested in James—which makes it seem rather a pity they have to be so expensive.

The Strength to Dream. By COLIN WILSON. *Gollancz*, 25s.

MR. WILSON has set out in this book to demonstrate that the imagination of a creative writer is inextricably allied to what he variously describes as a sense of values and a vision of the ultimate meaning of life. He tries to elaborate this idea by conducting the reader through the work of some twenty or thirty writers, mostly novelists. This curiously Baconian method of seeking general principles through the accumulation of particular facts is less than completely successful. Indeed Mr. Wilson's very zest for books, his lively curiosity about the personalities and problems of individual writers, continually diverts his attention from the central argument. He is never content to take one point from one author; if he wants to mention, for example, something said by Aldous Huxley, Evelyn Waugh, or Friedrich Dürrenmatt, then he has to hammer out a thumbnail sketch of the man's life, work, and *Weltanschauung*. Thus the thread is repeatedly lost.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Mr. Wilson is deeply interested in foreign literature, in morals, and in religion; and unlike most of his compatriots, he has a real relish for metaphysics, especially existentialism. But he seems almost afraid to follow his own bent consistently. He has the public too much on his mind; he instructs, he "entertains," he shows off—and yet at the same time he is careless. The result is a book that does less than justice to Mr. Wilson's intellectual powers, his seriousness, originality, and sensibility. He has it in him to do far better things than this, if only he would think more and write less, and turn his attention to what is known in Public Libraries as the "non-fiction department."

Memoirs of a Special Case. By CHAIM RAPHAEL. *Chatto & Windus*, 18s.

THE mutations of Anglo-Jewish sensibility provide some of the most fascinating phenomena of modern culture. Mr. Raphael, born in a north of England town where his father was synagogue cantor, had an education that was both Hebrew and rabbinical and sophisticatedly English before going up to Oxford where he moved freely between the intellectual and emotional worlds of Midrash and modernity. After a spell as Lecturer in Hebrew at Oxford and a visit to Palestine shortly before the war, he became involved in organising German

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Jewish refugees in England, an activity that brought him first to Canada, then to New York, where he spent fifteen years as labour expert at British Information Services before returning to England to become public relations man at the Treasury.

The memories provided by such a life are full of paradox and diversity, and Mr. Raphael weaves among them with a knowingness and a special kind of wit that are the product of the continuous interaction of his two major areas of experience. The tone is shrewd, sometimes wry; the bringing of biblical story or Jewish tradition into direct relationship with the world of modern literary fashion or contemporary urban sophistication or the history and politics of our time gives both sides a new look and shocks the reader into new sorts of attention. There is a fair amount of straight reporting in the book, which is well done, and when, say, one of the Psalms is shrugged into position in this context the result is a kind of sceptical wisdom that is both very Jewish (but not at all orthodox) and very contemporary. It is a pity that Mr. Raphael thought it necessary to jazz up his pages of cunningly woven reminiscences with patches of fiction. He is best at his own brand of autobiography and observation.

Primitive Song. By C. M. Bowra. *Weidenfeld & Nicholson*, 35s.

Sir Maurice Bowra's long study of the literary forms and values of the Greeks has led him to seek the first stirrings of poetic thought and technique in the songs of primitive peoples.

The groups chosen are the Pygmies of Gabon and Ituri, the Bushmen and hill Dama of S.W. Africa, the Semang of North Malaya, the Veddas of Ceylon, the Andaman islanders, the proto-Australians, the Eskimos and the tribes of Tierra del Fuego. In this anthropologist's and explorer's world, Bowra moves with authority and assurance, taking into it his own special savour of wide learning warmly felt.

The detailed analysis of poetic techniques and his imaginative but unforced interpretations of underlying human emotions and concepts are as pertinent to the song of a Bushman widow as they were to that of Homer. The songs themselves are beautiful and moving, and had they not been collected from the works of several different authors one would have suspected the author's perceptive touch in these excellent translations. Though it may seem strange to have a book on song with no musical illustrations, much of the material used was collected before the days of the tape-recorder and the ethno-musicologist. The photographs, however, are first-class.

We learn a lot from this book: about poetry, poets, the nature and possible mechanics of inspiration, about myth and symbol, about fundamental incentives. It is persuasively, humbly written from a premiss of great courtesy to the beliefs and emotions of these primitive peoples for whom the author exacts our respect and admiration—and astonishment that they should be so like ourselves.

6

The Stuff of Politics. By Sir Ivor Jennings. *Cambridge University Press*, 45s.

With this volume, Sir Ivor concludes his three-part study of British party politics; but those who turn to it expecting direct illumination upon the present situation will be disappointed. For someone who has spent a lifetime writing about political institutions and even designing them, Sir Ivor remains extraordinarily unpolitical. The controversies of the past are arranged and chronicled but in a manner which conceals both their interconnections, and the way in which they have played their part in bringing men and groups into power. He fails to make vivid the element of passion that in the past attached itself to the Irish Question, or to the rights of labour. Englishmen have not always been so reasonable. Are they reasonable now?

Clearly Sir Ivor thinks so. Britain for him has two conservative parties to-day differing little on internal affairs—the Tory Party tamed by time, and the Labour Party, purged of Marxism, and tied to the essentially conservative body of trade unionism. The fact that to-day (as much more often in the past than he allows for) external issues supply the ideological breaking-points—Aldermaston, the Common Market—is overlooked. And even in relation to Britain's own social arrangements there would seem to be less ground for complacency than such an analysis suggests.

Sir Ivor has been writing his book during a period of unusual stability in British party politics —now the ice in the river is breaking up. The question is which politicians will grasp the new opportunity: the fascination of politics is that the story is an unfinished one. Sir Ivor has a down on "romantics"; but they may have the laugh on him yet.

The Intellectual Hero. By Victor Brombert. *Faber*, 25s.

This book provides a literary pedigree for the anguished, alienated, self-tormenting *cérébral* who dominated the post-war French novel, but whose social origins go back to the Dreyfus case and the *instituteurs* who were the "lay apostolate" of the Third Republic. Mr. Brombert's scholarship, deep rather than wide, is considerable, and the chapters on Vallés, Bourget, Guilloux, and Martin du Gard should keep most readers quietly attentive. But on better-known and more controversial writers—Malraux, Sartre, Camus, Simone de Beauvoir—they may find his almost complete submission to his material an excessive display of critical virtue; he neither attacks nor defends, merely expounds, with great fidelity but intermittently stimulating insight, and in a solemn and rather pedestrian style. Some of his expositions—an appendix on Camus' *Le Renégat*, for example—make excellent footnotes to the work concerned, and his juxtapositions do throw some light on the books and authors juxtaposed; but any general conclusions have to be read between the lines. As so often with books of this kind, the chief merit of the sermon is that it may drive the audience back to study the texts for themselves.

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THE PRESS

Don & Dynamo

MR. RAYMOND WILLIAMS and Mr. Hugh Cudlipp both seem, from their latest books,* to lead over-exciting lives. Mr. Williams, wherever he looks, always finds "change" or "crisis" or "revolution"; Mr. Cudlipp is always involved in them. Mr. Cudlipp is always accepting a "challenge"; Mr. Williams is always asking us to meet one. They are, for sure, very bold fellows. In their different—but, perhaps, not so different—ways, they are both concerned with what Mr. Williams would call (ah! what on page 9 he does call) the "dramatic tightening of interest in this world of communications." Let us, then, tighten our interest, and see what we may learn. I do not, I must confess, find it easy to look at things in the same way as Mr. Williams, or to discuss them in the fervent "hurrah" language which he seems constrained to use:

> It came, really, as a breakthrough in experience, cutting across our usual categories. (p. 10)
>
> This emphasis is exceptionally important in the long crisis of the twentieth century. (p. 10)
>
> . . . the very lively arguments and controversies . . . which seem to be extending and intensifying year by year, as the sense of crisis mounts. (p. 13)
>
> The whole process has the effect of a cultural revolution. (p. 23)
>
> A synthetic culture is easy. An old culture is remote. We are caught in this tension, yet the forces of growth, the real drives of experience, cannot in the end be denied. (p. 26)
>
> In the stress of change there is a great deal of confusion. (p. 99)
>
> . . . already, at the level of theory, we have broken the deadlock which is so obviously damaging our society. (p. 129)

"At least now," run Mr. Williams' concluding words, "the challenge is clear." (p. 130.) Unfortunately, it is not.

It may be seen from these quotations what I mean by over-excitement. The suspicion grows that Mr. Williams conceals the lack of any acute or sober analysis of our current situation by daring and unsupported announcements, almost page by page, that he has discovered a breakthrough, a long crisis (this after, only a year ago, he discovered a long revolution: how long, O, Lord, how long?), a mounting crisis, forces of growth, drives of expansion, confusion, a deadlock (which he has broken at the level of theory) and, of course, a clear challenge. To say the least, it seems to me an over-stimulated condition in which to conduct a serious inquiry.

But it is more ominous than that. The most interesting feature of Mr. Williams' writing is its violence. He seems incapable of talking of any change, movement or effort, except in violent language. Tightening, breakthrough, crisis, struggle, revolution, pressures, drives, forces, tensions, stresses: these are the descriptive words which come naturally to him; and, to anyone who is used to reading social and political theory, they are warning signals. Those who habitually see political or social situations, or political or social movements, in such terms usually end as either apostles of despair or apologists of authoritarianism. Mr. Williams is a knitted figure, greyer than most of them, and his argument, certainly, is not a blue-print for an authoritarian régime. But it is a handy knitting pattern for it.

BUT ALL THIS TIME, Mr. Cudlipp has been up and doing as well. He is just as brave:

> Defying conventions. Hastening the inevitable in social change. Cocking a snook at the hoary traditions and pomposities of our times. Fighting the taboos. (p. 25)
>
> Say it first, get away with it first, and others will follow. At all events, say it first. (p. 31)
>
> A popular newspaper has to be more than merely interesting: it must be alarmingly provocative in every issue and abundantly confident of its own prowess and importance. (p. 47)
>
> Since those exciting days it is right to record that I have caused more heart failures in Buckingham Palace than Compton Mackenzie's book would have achieved had it been printed on cordite. (p. 54)
>
> Pricking the pompous is a noble art, though it may be practised in Britain only at one's legal peril. (p. 116)

This, I suppose, may be called living it up.

What Mr. Cudlipp calls "cocking a snook at the hoary traditions and pomposities of our times" is made ludicrously clear in his description of the Daily Mirror's "debs' ball."

> For some time the *Mirror* had been observing with suspicion the continuance of the "debs" racket . . .

—there is keen-eyed, crusading fervour for you.

> On the same day as the Queen Charlotte's Ball, the *Mirror* with a compound of parody and commonsense announced its rival show.

In the event, the "rival show" did not even "cock a snook" at the values and attitudes of the "debs' ball," but enviously, slavishly, imitated them:

> As soon as the announcement was made Norman Hartnell, the Queen's dressmaker, was on the phone to me. He designed for the winning deb a billowing gown of snow-white tulle with daisy chains festooned and cascading to the

* RAYMOND WILLIAMS: *Britain in the Sixties: Communications.* Penguin, 3s. 6d.
HUGH CUDLIPP: *At Your Peril.* Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 21s.

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hem.... Noel Whitcomb had the bright idea of engaging the Society debs' pet bandleader for the evening, Tommy Kinsman. And the Reverend Simon Phipps, Princess Margaret's friend, was there, learning to rock'n'roll.... And Captain Ronald Bowes-Lyon, a cousin of the Queen Mother, and genial Lord (Bob) Boothby. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer's step-daughter. And a few handfuls of viscountesses and ambassadors and statesmen. And Antony Armstrong-Jones.

Mr. Cudlipp's comment on this charade is: "The cheeky 'tabloid' chuckled. And why not?" No reason at all, except that it makes nonsense of the claim to be a popular *and radical* newspaper, seeking to change the values and attitudes of society.

Still, Mr. Cudlipp seriously believes that he and his newspaper have left their mark on society. There are, in his book, no more comic pages than the two chapters in which he asserts (or implies where he does not assert) that there has been a significant "revolution" (it's that word again) in the behaviour of royalty during the past five years, and that the popular press has helped to advance it:

> ...the social historians, the Professor Trevelyans of 20th-century Britain, will settle on 1957 as the year when the revolution at the Palace began, and they will decide that it was not the popular press that caused it, but public opinion reflected by the popular press.

What has this revolution been?

> In 1957 red, white, and blue tape and protocol were reduced on tours abroad. The Royal Family discovered television, and the Queen and the Prince gave direct talks.

Obviously, the revolution has not gone so far as to discourage Mr. Cudlipp from using capitals when writing about the Royal Family.

> In November, 1957, the Queen announced that presentation parties for debutantes would end in 1958 so that larger numbers of people could be invited to Palace garden parties instead. With equal propriety and solemnity the *Mirror* announced that its last Debs' Ball would also be held in 1958.

What Marats, what Dantons, what Robespierres, these revolutionaries are.

> The new democratic approach to the education of Prince Charles was developed in 1957 when Charles became the first heir to go to a boarding school instead of having private tutors.

Cheam School? A "new democratic approach to education"? Something, surely, is amiss with Mr. Cudlipp's radical vocabulary—or outlook.

> In 1954 divorced people were at last "allowed" into the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, though still not to that sacred patch within the Enclosure known as the Queen's Lawn. In 1957, however, the *Mirror* was able to record:
>
> A remarkable thing has happened at Ascot.
>
> A person who has been through the divorce courts trod that forbidden turf—at the Queen's invitation.
>
> Mr. Douglas Fairbanks (twice married) was received on the Queen's Lawn the day after the Queen had attended the Fairbanks' party at Cliveden.

As a scene of sea-green incorruptible, revolutionary passion, could even Carlyle have asked for better than that?

> In 1957, too, the Palace took another unprecedented step forward in which I played a minor part....
>
> Commander Richard Colville, the Queen's Press Secretary, confirmed to the *Mirror* yesterday that he had had to take the extraordinary step of denying rumours of discord in the Royal Family.

Mr. Cudlipp's part was to draw the attention of Mr. Selwyn Lloyd to a report which had appeared in the Baltimore *Sun*. The denial, when it appeared in the *Daily Mirror*, was of rumours that had not been circulated in Britain. O, bravest Cudlipp.

> In 1958 came more reforms. The public were able to see the State opening of Parliament on TV, long advocated by the newspapers. The Queen decided that she would not attend that year's Royal Film Show, and that from time to time she would cancel other traditional arrangements.

There is the extent of the revolution which the "Professor Trevelyans of 20th-century Britain" are expected to note as beginning in 1957. It is a little unfair to Trevelyan.

IN WHAT seems to me their over-excited states, then, it is sometimes difficult to see what Mr. Cudlipp and Mr. Williams are getting at. The problem they discuss is an interesting one, but not as important as they like to imagine. There are other forms of communication than those in which the professional communicators indulge and which they like to communicate to each other about. Mr. Williams provides us with his own definition of both communications and communication:

> I mean by communications the institutions and forms in which ideas, information, and attitudes are transmitted and received. I mean by communication the process of transmission and reception.

If this definition means anything at all, it should mean all forms; but, in fact, Mr. Williams pays no attention to such important institutions and forms in which ideas are transmitted and received as the trade union, the factory shop, the office canteen, the pub, the club, the institute, the hundred and one formal and institutional associations, to say nothing of the informal associations and groups, in which people spend most of their alert hours.

I have more than a little respect for the trained and academic sociologist, even though he some-

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times uses his methods and equipment a little pretentiously, and too often uses them, in spite of their allegedly scientific nature, to propound obscurantist explanations of human behaviour and social processes. (It is wonderful how many sociologists to-day end up by speaking with the same reverence and awe of society as Burke.) Nevertheless, what there is to be learned from a great academic sociologist, like Professor Morris Ginsberg, a trained mind never relaxing its standards, always scrupulously conscientious, always quiet in his statements and arguments, his prose always functional and economical, can hardly be overestimated. Especially it cannot be overestimated when there is so much easy sensationalism which is accepted as serious social criticism.

It is sensationalism which is the mark of the quasi-sociologist or quasi-social critics who to-day are so quickly translated into paperback pundits. We are not, as yet, so infested with them as America, but it cannot be long before others realise that, like Mr. Wright Mills or Mr. Vance Packard in America, Mr. Raymond Williams and Mr. Richard Hoggart have cottoned on to a good thing. As sociologists they do not qualify, because they observe no strictness in the use they make of sociological methods, even when equipped to use them; as social critics they do not qualify, because they ignore the diversity of human experience, so that they may concentrate on the aspects of it which will serve for their sensational generalisations, and ignore also the different depths of different kinds of experience, so that they may convince us that anything which happens to anybody in this long night of the 20th century is a matter for alarum if not despondency, and certainly matter for a book.

It is here that we find one of the main reasons why Mr. Williams is able to excite himself, and his public, with horror stories of mounting crises, revolutions, and break-throughs. In order to discuss the communication of ideas, information, and attitudes, he limits himself to the printed word, the theatre, cinema and television, the visual arts and music, and relates them to no other kind of human experience. Since there is always something new happening in these over-excitable worlds, it is not surprising that he is able to imagine that dramatic or significant events or trends are always taking place. What he ignores are precisely those institutions and forms in which people transmit and receive the ideas, information, and attitudes which make them attached to old influences, resistant to new influences, and open to quite other influences: which help to make them, indeed, themselves.

The moral and cultural attitudes of the country do not depend only on, and are not reflected only in, the changes in programme at the Royal Court or in exhibitions at the Tate, or even the showing of thrillers and Westerns on television; and not everyone, it sometimes seems necessary to remind ourselves, spends his Saturday nights and Sunday mornings in the search for new experiences.

To take an obvious example. Mr. Williams and those who are in the same line of business often excite themselves, and ask us to excite ourselves, by considering the kind of journalism and the kind of advertising which are used to sell, say, a washing machine. (In his latest book, the usual prim and puritanical distaste for advertising is never far from the surface.) Now, certainly, if it were *only* a specious journalism and a specious advertising which sold washing machines, it would be worth exciting ourselves at the thought of the power in these two forms of communication. But neither, in fact, are as powerful forms of communication as the washing machine itself, and its announcement, simply by the fact of its invention and its existence, that there is a lot of manual drudgery which is unnecessary in modern Britain. For all Mr. Williams' anxiety, and all Mr. Packard's sensationalism, this is the primary fact about a washing machine which communicates itself to most people —*and without the assistance of communicators.*

Again, women are no doubt encouraged by advertising and women's journals and women's pages (which Mr. Williams perfunctorily discusses) to spend money on cosmetics, hairdressing, and clothes. But, in the last thirty years especially, the far more important influence on such spending has simply been the improvement in the quality of cosmetics and methods of make-up, in the techniques of hairdressing, and in the materials and cutting of mass-produced clothes. *There is a social revolution*: one which Mr. Williams may not be able to observe very clearly in his "adult and young-worker groups," which he tends to produce as convincing evidence of his propositions, but which he can witness (and surely, for once, delight in) day by day, simply by standing on the corner, watching all the girls go by.

There is not the slightest doubt that very important ideas, information, and attitudes have been communicated by simply the fact of these improvements in—yes, technology. Women and girls with little money in their pockets realise that they can hope to look as attractive as women and girls with a lot of money; women and girls with difficult hair see that at last they may be able to do something with it; women and girls with faces like puddings are assured that they have a chance to make them look less like puddings. Even if Mr. Williams thinks it is frivolous, the mere pleasure which all of this gives seems to me important; even if he thinks it frivolous, it seems to me even more important that it has diminished a lot of trifling (it may seem) but real unhappiness; but what even he cannot dismiss as frivolous is the fact that it has meant a considerable extension, not only of actual equality, but of the idea of equality.

These changes, which are most remarkably represented by the achievement of Marks and Spencer in mass-producing, under contract, high quality goods at a reasonable price, and by the improvements in the cut as well as the materials in men's off-the-peg tailoring, have done more to break down social barriers, both actual and felt, than any of the kinds of communication which Mr. Williams discusses. There is something absurdly pre-Marxian in his assumptions and analysis, for he ignores completely in this book the profoundest of all ways by which ideas and attitudes are communicated, by changes in technology.

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THESE SEEM TO ME important matters which invalidate the whole of Mr. Williams' attitude to the subject of communications. It is possible to agree with him—it is hardly an original discovery—that

> What we call society is not only a network of political and economic arrangements, but also a process of learning and communication.

But most of the learning and communication does not take place in or through the institutions which he so hilariously (it is the only word which suits the state of euphoria in which he approaches his subject) describes. At no point does he explain what he thinks is the influence of the various forms of communication about which he asks us to be alarmed. Is their influence large or small, permanent or ephemeral? He does not tell us. What is their purpose and what should be their purpose? Again, he does not tell us, except in terms of the broadest generalisation:

> . . . men should grow in capacity and power to direct their own lives—by creating democratic institutions, by bringing new sources of energy to human work, and by extending the expression and exchange of experience on which understanding depends.

He can say that again, and I suppose it is reassuring in an unstable world that he will.

Even within his own terms of reference his methods are inexcusably perfunctory. There is the usual quantitative comparison of the contents of different newspapers, journals, and television programmes, which produces this kind of conclusion:

> In general, the distribution of display advertising forms a clear pattern. More expensive goods and services are more heavily advertised in the more expensive papers, or those reaching readers with most money. This is hardly surprising—

indeed—

> but it is worth noticing one aspect of the cheaper range: the concentration of patent medicine advertising in the papers read by the poorest and least educated members of the community. This apparently conscious policy needs thinking about.

Not least, I would have thought, by Mr. Williams. Of course, we should educate the least educated: but would it be to educate them out of their gullibility? My experience of the rich and most educated members of the community is that they are to-day by far the most addicted to taking drugs, and especially expensive drugs: all without the help of newspaper advertising. Are the poor to find balm in paperbacks alone?

THERE IS NOT SPACE to enumerate every false comparison which Mr. Williams seems to me to make. I will take only one: his comparison of the "lead" headlines of nine different national newspapers during one given week. It is an old game; but, as serious analysis, it means very little. For one thing, as every "splash" sub-editor knows, it is easily possible to make the "second lead" on any page, including the front one, more prominent and eye-catching than the "lead" itself: by lay-out, by use of pictures and by use of type. Both the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Guardian*—in spite of, or rather because of, their sedate appearance—frequently make expert use of this legitimate deception.

But Mr. Williams' analysis of the influence of the media he is discussing is so perfunctory that it is barely worth finding fault with it. The fact remains that there is a problem, even if it does not amount—or mount—to a crisis. The problem is: how to ensure that as wide a range of ideas, information, and attitudes as possible are available to as many people as wish to encounter them; and, especially, how to ensure that the ideas, information, and attitudes which represent values opposed to those usually acceptable to commercial management can find such expression.

THAT THESE ARE real problems is clear enough from a reading of Mr. Cudlipp's book. His startling chapters describing the mergers between the *Mirror* Group and the Amalgamated Press and the *Mirror* Group and Odhams are worrying, not so much because these mergers took place, *as because they were inevitable.* But I do not think that they are more than worrying for reasons, whether right or wrong, which Mr. Williams makes no attempt to consider.

1. The importance of the mass-circulation national newspaper has always been exaggerated. There is no reason for thinking that it has not simply been a temporary phenomenon of the railway age (which made its distribution possible), and is dying with the railway age. One or two of its kind may survive, but it is unlikely that it will ever again hold a dominating position in the communication of ideas and opinions. The fact that the International Edition of the *New York Times* is available at breakfast time in London is probably a more accurate pointer to the next development in the newspaper world than anything Mr. Williams postulates. As for the importance of the newspaper, as such, it is worth pondering the fact that a liberal revival has taken place in Britain only since the Liberal national newspaper expired.

2. One glance at any bookstall makes it obvious that an extravagantly large number of magazines and journals are already published; and, if Mr. Williams replies that very few of them are what he would call serious, or cultural, then he should remember that the expansion of the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer* and the successful founding of the *Sunday Telegraph* really represent the introduction of three new weekly magazines of ideas and opinions. Certainly, from the point of view of contributors, a point of view he puts strongly, they are the most encouraging development in journalism since the war.

3. The size of a newspaper group may well prove to be less dangerous than we are apt to think. Once a group is as large as the *Mirror* or the

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Thomson groups, it is inevitable that a different relationship must develop between the proprietor, or management, and the editor, than has hitherto existed. Not even a Cecil King or a Roy Thomson can closely supervise all his editors, and the close control which Lord Beaverbrook still keeps over his papers is possible only because they are so few in number. Mr. Williams at one point seems to recognise this:

> The old kind of newspaper proprietor, who wanted control so that he could propagate his opinions, is being replaced by a kind of proprietor who says he is not interested in opinions but simply in selling as many papers as he can.

This should encourage Mr. Williams; but he is so upset by anything that actually sells, especially if it sells successfully, that he overlooks the really interesting possibilities in the new development.

NEVERTHELESS, A PROBLEM remains: it seems unavoidable that, year by year, it will become more and more expensive to found or maintain a newspaper, a magazine, a television station, a publishing house, a concert hall, a local orchestra. The revelations in Mr. Cudlipp's book of the manner in which the two great mergers were negotiated can leave no one entirely happy at the thought of the huge sums of money which are now involved in securing the wide public distribution and communication of ideas, information, and attitudes.

Mr. Williams' proposals for dealing with the situation are as follows. They must be listed individually because it is only their cumulative force which reveals what he is up to:

1. Speech must be taught in such a way that it does not create a sense of social inferiority.

2. Writing must be taught in such a way that it is relevant to our actual needs: *i.e.*, to the writing of reports, memoranda, minutes, and business letters, as well as the writing of essays.

3. The teaching of "creative expression"—*e.g.*, plays, figures, pictures, models, music, dance—should be continued beyond the age at which it is usually dropped in schools.

4. Contemporary arts and literature should be "taught," as well as the classics.

5. Basic facts about the impersonal institutions in our society should be taught.

6. Critical standards and the use of a critical judgment should be taught.

7. To assist teachers in carrying out these new tasks, a Communications Centre should be established and an Institute of Communications Research.

Let us halt here, for a breather. (Obviously the wretched child is going to be allowed none.) There is something banal about the climax of these proposals: another Centre, another Research Institute, with jobs, of course, for the top communicators. But, how infinitely depressing the whole picture of the world of the mind and imagination which Mr. Williams presents. Is it really true that everything, these days, must be formally taught? I simply do not believe that you can teach critical standards —Mr. Williams actually makes the suggestion—by "repeat sessions of such programmes as *'Juke Box Jury'* with the inclusion of some different but still comparable music."

Nor do I believe that a child should be forced to waste its time by "regular discussion of two or three comparable television programmes, of a popular kind, *e.g.*, Westerns or panel games." All the children I know exercise their critical judgment swiftly, and with no waste of time. When they are bored (and what other critical standard does he ask them to have?) they switch the thing off, usually with the baldest of comments which should satisfy even Mr. Williams that they are capable of "creative expression." Enough light has already been let into most children's lives: there is scarcely one dark corner, one hidey-hole, in any modern house. Cannot some corner of their minds and imaginations be left free from prying, fussing, *teaching* adults?

BUT, LET US PROCEED, for this paternalism is about to run riot, and transform itself in the process:

8. The Press Council should be reformed in one major (the inclusion of lay representatives and a lay chairman) and two minor ways.

9. The establishment of a Books Council, representative of publishers, booksellers, and authors, which would collect the existing facts about the publishing world. The Books Council should also have the power, and the necessary capital grants, to set up "real bookshops" in the hundreds of places now served only by chains.

10. An advertising Council, similar to the Press Council, should be considered, to investigate specific items and sponsor independent research into some long-term issues.

11. A Broadcasting and Television Council, similar to the Press Council, should be established.

12. The Lord Chamberlain should be abolished.

13. Which? should be televised. (There, at least, he has had his way.)

14. A ten-year extension of copyright might reasonably be made the basis of a new trust fund, to be administered by authors' and musicians' professional organisations to help young writers and composers; a compulsory levy should be exacted from the sale of paintings.

15. Nationally- or municipally-owned theatres should be leased to companies of actors, producers, and dramatists, "representative of all trends and schools."

16. Film production facilities should similarly be made available to companies of professional film-makers.

17. In television, the means of production and transmission should be publicly owned and leased, over a period, to professional companies or groups of companies, who could decide their own work.

18. A Local Newspaper Trust, in which working editors and journalists would have a majority, could be publicly financed to "regain ownership" from the financial empires. Similar trusts might be set up elsewhere in the industry. The newsprint companies would be publicly owned.

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THERE IT IS: the world of Mr. Williams, and it is this which, according to himself, has broken the deadlock, "at the level of theory." Behind it, there is one startling principle:

> The principle should be that the active contributors have control of their own means of expression. In the case of contributors not immediately dependent on institutions, this means guaranteeing them, if they want, certain facilities which will be their means of living and working. In cases where the work can only be done through institutions, it means creating the opportunity for the setting up, by various working groups, of their own companies, which will then be guaranteed the facilities they need.

In a way, nothing could be more attractive. After fifteen years as a political journalist, it would be charming to go along to a body run by my friends and say that I wanted a grant for three years which would enable me to write the book on the working of the political system which I can now only write fitfully between the necessity to earn a daily living.

But... suppose the body were run by my enemies in my profession, and not by my group. (Such things are not unheard-of, where there is patronage by committee.) Then, would Mr. Williams save me, out of his own pocket? If I could not get £1,000 from my patronage body, would Mr. Williams spring me a quid to get on with the job? Ah, replies Mr. Williams, the traditional channels would still exist. Maybe, but they would exist under an almost insuperable disadvantage. How could a private publisher compete with a publishing company, leasing its facilities from a beneficent public trust, which would have to pay no royalties to the author, since he would have been paid by another (or perhaps the same) beneficent public trust?

What, anyhow, convinces Mr. Williams that authors are the best judge of what books deserve to be published, or actors or dramatists of what plays should be produced? There is such a thing—a formidable thing—as professional jealousy. (It is what makes the feuds of dons so rancorous.) Is it really possible to imagine a public trust of actors, producers, and playwrights deciding what actor should play the lead? There would be long knives in Shaftesbury Avenue that night. I can tell Mr. Williams this: a body of sociologists would not recommend his works for publication, and that would be a loss.

IT IS GLARINGLY OBVIOUS that Mr. Williams has not considered how much his schemes would cost. Public money is short, and the public is understandably jealous of it. There are such unexciting forms of creative expression as hospitals and schools and old people's homes which are starved, even though the ratepayer or the taxpayer could be convinced of their need more readily than of the need for "a real bookshop" in every town. I live in a town which has no "real bookshop"; but I would much rather see any available money spent on its schools, or even the teachers in the schools.

It is also obvious, if only cumulatively so, that Mr. Williams's paternalism crosses smartly into the uglier territory of authoritarianism. This is most clear in his proposal that all newsprint should be publicly owned. During the General Strike, when Churchill was producing the Government's strike-breaking *British Gazette*, he fought a bitter battle with *The Times* in an attempt to commandeer its newsprint, and so close it down, although it was the only independent newspaper managing to appear. *The Times* could call on considerable resources of prestige and influence in order to resist the attempt, and it succeeded. Is Mr. Williams really prepared to hand over to any government, however democratically elected, the power which the control of newsprint means?

FROM IMAGINING ABOUT HIM, above him, under him, a whole phantasmagoria of forces, drives, and pressures, all mounting to crisis, Mr. Williams is inevitably led to advocate a control of them which, although he calls it democratic, is authoritarian in its institutions and its spirit. From wishing to pry at every point in the development of a child's mind and imagination, Mr. Williams is inevitably led to set up body after body, all endowed with the right to pry and interfere. From hostility (which I share) to many of those who own and/or control so many of the institutions by which ideas are communicated, Mr. Williams needlessly proceeds to advocate an even stricter control—by himself and myself, and any other communicator skilled at getting himself appointed or elected to a committee. Thus are freedom's enemies born.

HE MAY REPLY by asking me what my solution would be to the problem which I agree exists. I do not know the Answer, and I do not believe there can ever be one. But I do know that an empirical answer, for the moment, can only be found by paying attention to the real sources and conditions of power, whether political or economic. When Mr. Williams' *The Long Revolution* appeared, it was enthusiastically welcomed by Left-wing critics, because it seemed to offer a way out of their dilemma. Unable to propose any serious economic or political reforms, they convinced themselves that these no longer were of central importance, that there were deeper, subtler, *social* forces at work, which the blind, old-fashioned political and economic thinker could not see, poor fool.

It is this which is the fundamental fallacy of all the quasi-sociologists and quasi-social critics. If there are changes to be made in our society, they are changes which touch the relationship between wealth and power, not the arrangements for book publication and distribution.

Henry Fairlie

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

From Utopia Towards Realism

THE new Programme of the CPSU may not prove in the end to be such an epoch-making document as its sponsors have claimed. Like its predecessor of 1919, it may in time seem to offer too many handles to critics and be consigned to oblivion. It is also the case that at the Twenty Second Congress of the Party in October, 1961, which was primarily convened in order to debate and adopt the Programme, the limelight of publicity was stolen by the dramatic denunciation of Stalin and of his alleged supporters in the USSR and outside. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to doubt the significance of the Programme. Whatever fate may be in store for it in the internal political life of the Soviet Union, its present importance lies in the fact that it represents the image which the Soviet leaders, after much deliberation and thought, wish to project, both at home and also abroad. It will probably be some time before we have another statement on which so much care has been lavished.

The Programme is therefore not unworthy of the study which scholars have been devoting to it. But it may not be out of place to look at its more general nature and character, and to search in it for some clues to the political climate in the Soviet Union as it enters the 'sixties, and looks ahead, both at home and abroad. Ostensibly, of course, the Programme looks ahead to communism, and it is to the task of building communism, on the delights of which the vaguer parts of the programme wax very lyrical, that the Soviet citizen is summoned by its final clarion call: "The Party solemnly proclaims: the present generation of Soviet people shall live in Communism." The communist utopia had fascinated political thinkers long before Marx, as interpreted by Lenin, brought it into the realm of party politics. As we know from his 1844 manuscript, Marx's vision of the coming future, when men would no longer be "alienated" from society and when all the failings that characterise the daily life of men would be overcome, long preceded the social and economic analysis for which he is more famous.[1] For Lenin, who was not usually much given to visions, Communism became a more practical affair. The famous "Soviets plus electrification" may have been just a slogan, and was in any case rather meaningless. But in 1917, in *State and Revolution*, Lenin gave a precise, materialistic, and concrete picture of what he understood by communism:

> The state will only be able to wither away when society puts into practice the rule "each according to his abilities, to each according to needs"; *i.e.* when people will have become so used to observing the fundamental rules of communal life and when their labour has become so productive, that they will voluntarily labour *according to their abilities*.... The distribution of products will then no longer need any regulation by society of the quantity of the products which each is to receive, each will fairly take "according to his needs."

Now whatever may be the vague hopes for the remote future, it is quite clear from the Programme that this is not the kind of communism which is to come into being in the twenty years' period with which the Programme is concretely concerned.

In the first place, the Programme makes it quite plain that state regulation of distribution according to "needs" will continue—it is the state which will decide the needs of each, not the individual himself. And secondly the state itself will survive throughout the period foreseen, though it is destined to "wither away" in the remote and quite undefined future. More particularly, the party will not only survive, but will have an especially important role to play in leading society towards communism. We are told nothing about the "withering away" of the party, even in the remote and undefined future.

IN FACT, STRIPPED OF its more oratorical parts, what the Programme promises is not communism in the traditional sense, but an expansion of material prosperity, as a preparation for remote and ultimate communism. It is true, as many commentators have pointed out, that what is envisaged is something not unlike "a prosperous welfare state"—a rather more dragooned and regulated Sweden, perhaps. Where there is a state, and above all a powerful and ubiquitous party, there will continue to be "government of men": there can be no possibility here for Engels's (and Saint-Simon's) "administration of things," the easy, spontaneous self-administration by happy men, no longer sundered by the jealousies, fears, and strains which are the product of capitalism alone. So long as the party continues in control—and there is no word in the Programme of its demise either within the twenty years or at any time thereafter—it is idle to talk of the easy, effortless administration foreseen in Lenin's utopian vision in *State and Revolution*. This was to come into being even before the exploiters had been completely eliminated—all would learn to administer and no special machinery of repression would be necessary for the few individual deviations from the happy norm which

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[1] See on this question the recent book by Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge University Press).

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might still occur. This vision of incipient utopia—so curiously reminiscent of the "advanced" schools which were so popular in the 'twenties in England, at any rate—which Lenin believed would come into being after the revolution, was, according to Lenin, to be realised progressively as exploiters were eliminated and as all learned the habit of living in society as brothers and not as class enemies. *State and Revolution* makes no mention whatever of the party (except in one instance, which is quite irrelevant in the context of *control* by the party). Yet, as Bukharin pointed out clearly in 1918:

> "Comrade Lenin has written that in Russia every scullion will be taught to govern the country. It is a good thing to teach a scullion to govern a country. But what will be the result if you put a commissar over the scullion?"

It was the crux of the problem then: it is still the crux of the problem now. The new Programme has at least squarely recognised it by admitting the continued and apparently permanent survival of party control.

This admission becomes particularly concrete if one turns back to the Programme of 1919, which incidentally was forgotten not many years after it was voted. To read this programme is to enter into the world of *State and Revolution*, the world of illusion, idealism, and utopia. Perfectible man is here portrayed striding forward to the reward of his natural virtue, when once the evils produced by capitalism and exploitation are progressively removed. Only the "exploiters" would be deprived of freedom. All restrictions on freedom must be regarded "without exception as transitional measures of combat against the efforts of the exploiters" to defend their ill-gotten privileges. When exploitation has disappeared the party will ensure the "complete removal" of all restrictions on freedom. (Who are the exploiters now, it may pertinently be asked?) The party will "completely destroy" all traces of former inequality and special privilege; it will introduce full responsibility of all officials in the conduct of their offices. Criminal law will "eventually" be replaced by a system of "measures of an educational character." The trade unions must ensure that they "actually concentrate in their hands the complete management of the entire national economy." It is presumably in the full confidence that no one will bother to read the text of the 1919 Programme that the 1961 Programme blandly asserts: "The Second Programme of the Party (has)... been carried out."

THE PRACTICAL Lenin certainly also had his idealistic and utopian side. But the 1919 Programme was not intended as utopia. It was designed as a practical plan of action; it was believed to be a programme which could be fulfilled, given effort and good will. It was not foisted on a rigidly disciplined party from above. It was discussed and debated in a free and genuine manner which had become inconceivable by 1961. It was intended to be implemented—or so it seems from the debate. Did Lenin really believe that the scullion would one day "govern" without the commissar standing at his elbow? Perhaps that was the one question which he never allowed himself to debate, even in the secrecy of his own heart.

The 1961 Programme has at any rate shed these utopian illusions, and I am not sure that this is a bad thing. It enunciates squarely the concrete fact that party rule has come to stay. It calls upon the Soviet citizen to recognise and accept this fact, and to abandon the illusion that in this respect things are going to change. In return it promises him great material benefits and prosperity.

This partial recognition of a part of the truth—the truth of the essential nature of Soviet society as a despotism, however benevolent, exercised through the party apparatus—may yet prove to be a step forward. It is better to face the truth than to live in a world of fantasy. Both Lenin and Stalin were active in encouraging the persistence of worlds of myth in which the fiction was preserved by the simple method of coercion. The commissar did the governing, while the scullion was repeatedly told that "his" system of government was the most free and democratic ever known. If he challenged it, he was put in prison or shot as a class enemy. The Stalin Constitution of 1936, with its charter of human rights, was voted, amidst paeans of praise for Stalin, at the very moment when the tumbrils filled with the first batches of victims of the great purge were rumbling past the doors. To recognise, at any rate, that Soviet government is based not on law but on arbitrary party coercion, may yet prove to be the first step towards ensuring that that coercion is kept within some proper bounds.

This indeed is what Khrushchev claims to be doing. The Programme contains a long section condemning the "Cult of Personality" and laying down future rules for party conduct. All this is reproduced in the new party Rules, also adopted at the Twenty Second Congress, but the practical value of the changes do not appear to be very fundamental or far-reaching. Indeed, it may be doubted whether any fundamental changes can ever be effected in the Soviet Union unless and until the individual is given some opportunity of redress against the government or the party before tribunals which are independent of both the government and the party. This may still be a long way off. But the fact remains that it is more likely to come about in a system which admits that party dictatorship exists than in a system which builds up an elaborate scheme of conventional lies in order to pretend either that party rule does not exist, or that it is only a temporary expedient.

IT WAS NOT a coincidence that so large a part of the time and attention of the delegates at the Congress was taken up with renewed attacks on Stalin, and on the misdeeds of Kaganovich, Malenkov, and Molotov. It is idle for Khrushchev seriously to pretend (if indeed he does so pretend) that he was not fully associated with the misrule and tyranny of Stalin—otherwise he would not have remained alive to tell the tale. If, therefore, he is to succeed in his appeal for the acceptance

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of party domination in return for the material benefits promised in the immediate future, it is necessary for him to give constant, and repeated, proof of the fact that he has really and truly broken with the past. Thus it came about that the secret speech of 1956 had to be followed by the open speech of 1961, and the removal of Stalin's remains from the mausoleum. Where will the process end?

For the simple fact remains that straightforward terror of the kind practised by Stalin is a much safer form of despotism (for the despot) than the attempt at reform inaugurated by his successor. The explanation has been provided by de Tocqueville:

> "It is not always as a result of a country going from bad to worse that a revolution occurs. It very often happens that a people which had supported without a murmur, and as if unconscious of it, the most oppressive rule, should reject it with violence the moment its pressure is reduced. The system of government which is destroyed in a revolution is nearly always an improvement on the one which immediately preceded it, and experience shows that the most dangerous moment for a bad government normally occurs at the point where it begins to improve itself. Nothing but a genius for statecraft can save a monarch who takes it upon himself to placate his subjects after a long period of oppression. The evils which have been suffered patiently as something unavoidable begin to seem intolerable the very moment that the possibility of escaping from them enters one's mind."[2]

It is small wonder that Khrushchev's policy should fill with apprehension the Chinese communists, and those diehards in the Soviet party, like Molotov, who believe that there still is a good deal to be said for the methods of rule pursued by Stalin, if the whole authority of the party is not to be endangered.

THIS THEN SEEMS TO ME to be the essence of the new Programme, if one looks at its practical side and pays less attention to the utopian sections which relate to an indefinite and unforeseeable future: an appeal to men's materialist longings for a good life, and a vague promise that party despotism will be kept within some bounds. It is a far cry from the revolutionary utopia of 1919. It is easy to understand the revulsion which it must cause among the austere and fanatical Chinese communists. It was Lenin himself who in 1920, only a year after the second Programme was adopted, was constrained to attack excessive revolutionary ardour—outside Soviet Russia mainly—in his *"The Infantile Disease of Leftism in Communism."* I should like to imagine that Mao Tse Tung, in his semi-retirement, is at this moment busily engaged on a sequel entitled *"The Senile Disease of Rightism in Communism."* From his point of view that is what the Soviet party is suffering from. He may perhaps not be far wrong.

[2] From A. de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution,* Part III, Chapter 4.

THE Soviet Union has reached an interesting phase in its political development, when the problems raised by Khrushchev's policy are becoming acute. While Stalin was alive, and for some time thereafter, the system was rough but simple. Officially, party rule was perfect, infallible, just and historically predestined. Criticism of shortcomings was adequately dealt with by silencing the critics, or by finding suitable scapegoats, or by a combination of both methods. Khrushchev has now admitted—however much he may wrap it up in talk of "cult of personality" and the evil influence of a few wicked advisers—that party rule can and did go seriously wrong. He has been forced to bargain for support from the rank and file in the future with promises of reform and with an assurance that the break with the past is complete. It remains to be seen how sure a foundation this will prove for maintaining in being a form of rule which still obstinately defies all semblance of relating the government to the genuine will and decision, freely expressed, of the governed. If the foundations should begin to erode, it may mean a substantial modification of one-party rule as we have known it hitherto. If an attempt is made to shore up the eroding foundations by a return to *absolute* terror—for, after all, a certain amount of terror still survives in a country which applies the death penalty more extensively than any other country in the world—will another Stalin emerge who has the courage to do it without faltering? And will be succeed?

These are the questions which seem to loom on the horizon for the Soviet Union during the next twenty years—or twenty months. They are little related to communism or many of the other exalted ideas contained in the Programme. They are likely to overshadow the Programme in importance, much as the discussion of Stalin's misdeeds overshadowed discussion of the Programme at the late Congress. It may be that the Programme will before long go the way of its predecessor and remain in oblivion. Some commentators were surprised that the present Soviet leaders should have been so rash as to make concrete promises about what would be done in a foreseeable period of twenty years. What will happen, for example, if the promises are still unfulfilled in twenty years' time? This seems an unrealistic view of Soviet society. For one thing, the present leader is, in the ordinary course of nature, very unlikely to be alive in twenty years' time, and his successors can if they wish lambast him to their hearts' content for making "demagogic promises." Moreover, the Programme contains built-in safeguards against failure: it includes the warning that "Complications in the international situation and the resultant necessity to increase defence expenditures may hold up the fulfillment of the plans for raising the living standard of the people." So if the guns still continue to outweigh the butter this can always be blamed on the "imperialist war mongers" who are responsible for increasing international tension. Most important, so long as the present system of one-party rule survives, there should be little difficulty in silencing any awkward arguments or criticism which take the Programme as their basis.

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Conversely, should the party find it difficult to repress such awkward criticism, it will probably be a sign that its days of power without real responsibility are in any case numbered.

In short, the Programme may not prove to be very important on the domestic scene after all—except in so far as it is symptomatic of the new outlook of the present rulers of the USSR. But it does contain some awkward promises (notably of immediate agricultural progress) which are unlikely to be fulfilled, and it may soon have to be relegated to the background—along with most of the real history of the party. I suspect, however, that it is not primarily for home consumption that it has been thought necessary to produce a new Programme at this moment of time. It is probably too late after forty-five years of promises, few of which have been fulfilled, to captivate the imagination of very many Russians, even young Russians, with any new bold promises about the future. But outside the Soviet Union there is a vast audience on whom this document may be expected to have quite a different effect. These are the inhabitants of the new countries, the under-developed countries of Asia and Africa. It is to them that the Russian communists have for many years past addressed a special appeal, in the firm belief that the fate of the "imperialist" powers will ultimately be decided by these denizens of their former empires.

FOR ITS APPEAL to the peoples of Asia and Africa the Soviet communist party was, until the publication of the Programme, sorely in need of a basic document in which the whole *credo* of the party and the version of its history which it is desired to project is set out. Stalin's famous *Short Course* was admirably suited for this purpose, but that is now discredited and disavowed. The new party *History*, although only published in 1959, is already out of date in the light of the new political fashion. It is in any case too long, too dull and too much like the *Short Course* to serve the purposes of export. (Little effort has in fact been made to disseminate it.) The Programme in contrast is very well suited for purposes of export to Africa and Asia. It is, comparatively, short and pungent. It has a strong element of moral fervour. It embraces in one grand sweep two events as parts of one and the same great historical process: the progressive development of the USSR since 1917 and the progressive collapse of colonialism. It offers a confident prediction of Soviet progress in the immediate and determined future—in the next twenty years.

Now although all these claims and arguments are often open to strong objections, it would, I think, be unwise to underestimate their potential effect on an African or Asian audience. Africans or Asians for one thing are often less familiar with Soviet reality, which is so frequently at variance with claims made for it. They are also perhaps less inclined to judge the past of the Soviet régime as harshly as it is judged by those who live under the Western form of democracy. It is as well to remember that they have often seen and experienced the impact of Western democracy in a form which is less just and less humane than is its more usual practice in Western Europe or America. They have nationalist aspirations which have in the past been frustrated by the colonial powers. Above all, they stand on the threshold of industrialisation faced by all the obstacles which arise in its way—the absence of a stable and honest administration, the lack of well-rooted democratic institutions or the need to accumulate capital for investment in the face of obstruction from a traditional propertied class. To such an audience the Soviet system, with its manifest and simple practical proofs of military and scientific success, may well offer an irresistibly attractive model. At any rate, it offers a challenge which the Western powers have as yet done little to meet.

For the Soviet Union, as the Twenty-Second Congress showed, this aspect of the Programme is of particular importance at the present time. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union itself faces a challenge to its leadership in Asia and Africa from China. China offers her own brand of revolutionary dynamics in open competition with the Soviet Union, and this competition has been rapidly gathering momentum in 1960 and 1961. To this challenge the Soviet Union has been increasingly forced to respond—how far the response will go, whether it will lead to an open breach between the two communist powers, for example, it would be rash to predict. But there can be no doubt that the CPSU needs all the arguments it can muster in order to keep its lead in the undeveloped world. To this competition the Programme may have made an important contribution. It is not a coincidence that the Congress which adopted the Programme was also the scene of a new and formidable attack on China, albeit directed by circumlocution at the Albanian communists and at other "Stalinists" at home and abroad.

ALL THIS MAY BE very remote from Marx and the vision of Communist utopia sketched in the 1844 manuscript. Competent and persuasive analysts have of course doubted whether we are right in seeing any real relevance of the nineteenth-century studies of the future course of highly industrialised societies made by Marx to the form of modern communist rule. It is said that this latter is essentially a system for the rapid industrialisation of backward societies, and nothing else. This is not the place to discuss so momentous an issue. It is important, however, to remember that whether this view of communism be true or false, it is primarily in this simple guise of offering a rapid solution to their own problems that modern communism appears to the new countries of Asia and Africa.

Nor is this impression on the part of the new countries to be countered by dwelling on the unpleasantness of the Soviet régime. What I think *is* needed is much more serious analysis of the relations between the consequences of Leninism on the one hand (*i.e.*, Stalin) and the practical problems of industrialisation and planning on the other. In other words, if the African or Asian wants a good tough system for rapid development and for keep-

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ing his "feudal" landlords under control, does he also have to have the local versions of Stalin, Yezhov, and Beria? It is a commonplace that the liberal form of our Western democracy has little practical meaning for an impatient new country. But does the choice really lie between Gladstone and Stalin? Obviously not.

Professor Seton-Watson is right, in my view, when he points out [ENCOUNTER, May] that the peculiarities of the Soviet régime are due not to the fact that it is a tough régime, but to the fact that it is a tough régime bedevilled by a particular kind of dogma. One can think of all kinds of tough régimes—one-party régimes included (Mexico, for example)—in which a high degree of planning, coercion, and direction could be combined with some respect for the individual, and of which concentration camps and secret police would not be necessary concomitants. The Soviet régime is the product not only of tough Bolsheviks, but of tough Bolsheviks operating within the strict bounds of a narrow, inflexible, and often quite idiotic dogmatism. The sooner Africans and Asians learn that one can have quite a lot of toughness without the dogmatism, the better it will be for them—and I think some of them are learning this already.

Needless to say, this is the one lesson which the Soviet Union is anxious that they should *not* learn. That is why the Soviet leaders are always so careful to present Stalin's little aberrations as the eccentricity of one vain old gentleman in an otherwise perfect system. This may be good propaganda, but it is very poor history, and even worse political science. The reason why Stalin's "Third Revolution" took the violent form it did were reasons of politics and dogma (getting rid of oponents, making sure the peasants did not hold the state up to ransom, and the like) quite as much as reasons of economics. Moreover (*pace* Mr. Alec Nove, ENCOUNTER, March), given the form which Stalin's "Third Revolution" took, the purges and all the rest of it seem to me to follow quite naturally and logically. But I have argued this in my recent book, and will not pursue it here.

If the Africans and Asians are to understand that they can have their own form of "Third Revolution" without all the blessings of Communist totalitarianism, it is important that they should see the connection between Lenin in 1921, and Stalin both 1929 and 1936. They will not get very far in this so long as Western historians keep on telling them (as many of them do) that the whole process was merely a regrettable but necessary form of rapid economic transformation.

Leonard Schapiro

LETTERS

"International Psychopath"

THE ADMIRABLE ARTICLE on Donald Hume by Giles Playfair and Derrick Sington appears at a particularly appropriate time, since there are many people who have recently been shocked by the hanging of James Hanratty, another murderer who was obviously psychopathic.

Can nothing be done to ensure that our courts are compelled to hear medical evidence before sentence is passed on such cases? Hanratty, for example, was recommended for a special school at the age of eleven—although his mother refused to let him go. At fifteen he was admitted to a mental hospital, following head injury, where at least one doctor thought that he was mentally defective. By 17 he was already launched on a career of crime. He had some psychiatric treatment as an out-patient at 18, and (after slashing his wrists in Wormwood Scrubs), was diagnosed as a potential psychopath by a prison doctor. Mental deficiency and psychopathy can, of course, co-exist in the same person.

Not a word of all this was heard at Hanratty's trial, presumably because he himself did not plead guilty; and although we may assume that some medical evidence was placed before the Home Secretary, the public is left entirely ignorant as to how the decision was reached that a man so obviously mentally abnormal should be executed.

The hanging of Hanratty is a sad reflection on our conception of justice; but, as Playfair & Sington point out, what is even more shocking is that such men as Hume and Hanratty can be allowed to continue in their lives of crime when they are clearly suffering from a mental abnormality which could be diagnosed, and even possibly treated, if we had adequate facilities for dealing with them.

Psychiatrists are often accused of being sentimental about criminals; but society would be more adequately protected from the psychopath if, instead of meting out punishment to offenders whom we know will not respond to it, we devoted time, money, and research to the problem of the early diagnosis and treatment of such people. It is certain that at least some psychopathic criminals could be detected at a very early stage in their career if the courts insisted on proper psychiatric examination, and if magistrates and judges were less concerned with the crime itself and more with the person who had committed it.

It seems from the figures that those who go to prison fall into two main categories. A high proportion, some say as high as 80 per cent, serve one sentence and never return to prison. These people are probably normal citizens who have fallen victim to temptation and in whom punishment is effective in preventing recurrence.

Another and much smaller group are those who

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embark on a career of crime from which no punishment is effective in deterring them. It is obvious from the figures that a high proportion of crime is committed by a very small number of people, many of whom come into the psychopathic class. We have a great need to know very much more about the criminal psychopath. We need to have institutions in which he can be confined; we need to be able to study him over a long period and to explore every possible method of dealing with him. So long as we continue to treat these people as if they would respond to punishment, so long are we making them worse; and one may well wonder whether either Hume or Hanratty would have committed their abominable crimes if they had been properly dealt with in the first instance.

Psychopaths are people whose emotional relationship with others is practically non-existent. A great deal of their behaviour can be understood in terms of their failure to develop any power of identification with other people, whom they regard as things rather than persons like themselves. If another person means nothing to one emotionally there is no reason to treat him decently. There is no reason to tell him the truth, to respect his property, or even to treat his continued existence as being of any importance. Moreover, it is probable that the effectiveness of punishment lies more in the withdrawal of approval which is implicit in its administration than in its intrinsic unpleasantness. The psychopath does not respond to punishment because the approval of society means nothing to him; and it is only when he begins to feel himself part of a group which values him that he is likely to care anything for the opinion of others.

Psychopaths require an entirely different approach from that provided by our code of criminal justice. Is it not time that we did something to see that they get it, both for their sake and for our own protection?

ANTHONY STORR

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Nove on Stalin

ALEC NOVE'S article, "Was Stalin Really Necessary?" (ENCOUNTER, April 1962), is very stimulating. Although his answer to the basic question posed is not quite clear, one can agree with most of what he says. Still, my own inclination is to say "Quite, quite unnecessary!" and so I should like to make a few comments on the way Nove handled the three central issues:

(1) What is the meaning of historical necessity?
(2) Was the forcible collectivisation necessary?
(3) Was the Great Purge linked with the 1929–31 economic upheaval or was it only a consequence of Stalin's "excesses"?

1. Nove argues that historical necessity is not historically immanent (why exactly is it historical?) but is to be understood as the existence of objective and subjective factors limiting the range of possible choice. The subjective factors are concerned with the Aristotelian essences of those taking decisions. "A rabbi does not eat pork; were he to do so, he would not be a rabbi." Similarly: "there may have been a number of solutions to the problems posed by Russia of the 'twenties which the Communists could not have chosen because they were Communists." That may be true, but if historical necessity is so defined then each régime carries within it its own "inevitability." The Indian Congress Party, for instance, cannot do certain things without ceasing to be an Indian Congress Party, and Soviet Russia's "historical necessities" are thus irrelevant to it by definition. Is this the conclusion Mr. Nove wanted to draw? He rightly rejects Marxist "historical inevitability," but then in his reasoning the belief in it is surely a subjective factor without which the Soviet Communists would not be Communists. It thus follows that, however mistaken and however "voluntaristic" their acts, they are in Nove's scheme in a sense all "necessary" by definition. This is, of course, part of a genuine paradox; but it largely rests on how the words "possible" and "necessary" are defined. Is this begging the whole question? If "really necessary" is not the same as "historically necessary," why is it not?

2. The answer to the second question is given in the affirmative: Yes, Nove argues, forcible collectivisation was necessary. This is not the answer implied by Gomulka, and Khrushchev himself admitted at the 22nd Congress the possibility of a different road to socialism in countries "where peasants are deeply attached to private property." The Polish Communists have quickly reproduced this passage offering a doctrinal legitimation of their present practice. If this is so, doesn't it cast doubt on the "necessity" of Stalin's forcible collectivisation? Peasants everywhere are attached to their property; so were they in Russia. It is interesting to compare Nove's conclusions on the subject with those given in the official Polish Communist theoretical journal *Nowe Drogi* (No. 12, 1961):

> Apart from objective factors there are also subjective factors. There are no situations in which the Party or the individuals do not have possibility of choice, in which definite problems cannot be solved by different methods, less costly, and avoiding many unnecessary sufferings and negative effects.

Would Nove reject this in favour of the Khrushchevian justification of Stalin's "necessities" (*minus* his "excesses")? Is there not enough evidence that the whole monstrous character of Soviet collectivisation was connected more with *political* than with economic necessities?

3. According to Nove, forcible collectivisation stemmed from objective necessities and only its excesses (which Stalin also condemned) resulted from subjective factors and indirect effects. This apparently is not the case with the great purges of 1936–38. In his view, "the great purges cannot possibly be derived from any 'objective necessity' arising from past policies. They can be derived from Stalin's thirst for supreme power, his intense, pathological suspiciousness."

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This is an astonishing argument. It is enough to look at the record (for example, in the chapter on the subject in Leonard Schapiro's history of *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*) to see that historical evidence points to a precisely opposite conclusion. The Great Purge was more than intimately linked with the past policies of forcible collectivisation. Nobody, of course, would deny Stalin's "thirst for power," but this was also an operative factor in the previous instances. "Given the nature of the system," Stalin had at each stage been taking decisions which largely conditioned his subsequent actions (and "Stalin would not be Stalin, if he had done otherwise").

Collectivisation may be regarded either as an end in itself, or as a means to secure industrial growth. In the former case, the problems besetting Soviet agriculture today cast doubt on the economic nationality of collectivisation; in the latter case, in the perspective of 1931, Stalin may well have felt that the drastic method of squeezing agriculture in order to build industry quickly may be the only one, but three decades later this does not seem so certain and there is no reason to fall into the trap of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* type of reasoning. In any case the economic perspective is not the only one. What may seem economically necessary may not be "really necessary" if the human price to be paid is too high. It is only too easy to confuse retrospectively doctrinal necessity with economic necessity and then make it into a "historical necessity".

The exclusively economic perspective probably accounts for Nove's conclusion on the great purges. "Objective necessity" in this context means for him more or less plausible economic reasons; and these, he seems to suggest, may have justified drastic steps in 1931 but not after 1934 when the economic situation improved. But in political perspective there were apparently reasons more compelling than the economic one for Stalin to act as he did.

For an economist there may be a temptation to qualify economic reasons as "objective necessity", but not political reasons. This reflects a certain economic determinism. It is an oversimplification to regard Stalinism as just a function of the necessities of industrialisation in "backward Russia." Stalin had risen to power before his "second revolution" and not as a result of it. There is no historical reason to confer an economic justification on his would-be imitators in the underdeveloped countries, however harsh may be the conditions of the industrial "take-off" in them.

LEOPOLD LABEDZ

Survey,
London

African Students

IN YOUR ISSUE of February, 1962, M. J. Lasky quotes an undergraduate of this University as saying that my department has prevented the study of French, a language required to foster African unity.

Neither I nor my colleagues have ever opposed the introduction of French. I was one of its original supporters in Faculty and Senate as the records of these show. I have been personally responsible, during the vacancy of the appointment of Lecturer in French, for the preparation of the development plan which is expected to give the subject full departmental status by 1964. The language would have been available to students nearly two years ago, had the Sudanese administration of the University been able to negotiate a suitable appointment. Your article is certainly unlikely to help.

Perhaps you do not appreciate that French is not taught in the state schools, and is unlikely to begin to be taught there until the supply of teachers can be ensured. As a consequence, only some dozen students from private schools attain, in each year, the normal school certificate standard for entry. In spite of this we have accepted the compromise with usual University standards involved in introducing French as a new subject, precisely because everyone concerned is aware of its importance as an African lingua franca. My own attitude is a matter of public record, here, and at the recent Leverhulme Conference on Language Problems in African Universities, at which I was one of the representatives of the Sudan.

Your informant's implication that my colleagues and I have political motives for our academic decisions is totally untrue. This University is not controlled by expatriates. It has a Sudanese Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Council, Officials, and Administration, as well as a large and increasing number of Sudanese academic staff. The preservation of its academic standards is not a subterfuge for the domination of Sudanese by expatriates, but the natural and reasonable policy of an institution of learning, with which most students also concur, *after* they have obtained their degrees.

The phrasing of your footnote from Edward Atiyah, "Things change, a little . . .," seems intended to assist the suspicion that expatriate academics are, like military bases, the objectionable relics of imperialism, arrogantly standing for doctrines of racial superiority. This is, of course, the almost humorously traditional view of our undergraduates, to many of whom, indeed, it is as much a part of the decencies of student life as their Western clothes, or as anti-fascism to my own generation. It is, however, an attitude somewhat less justifiable than anti-fascism. Whatever may have been the case under an earlier régime, the expatriate staff of this university are, on the whole, professional academics without political or racial commitments, anxious to serve the university to the best of their abilities. The interests of their own careers and of their students concern them in the usual human proportions, and many of them do take thought also for the wider community of the Sudan and of Africa, in which the ultimate effect of their teaching is produced. Many expatriates are to be found outside, and not inside, racially exclusive community clubs. Many take the trouble to learn the language, to see the country thoroughly, and to attempt the difficult task of knowing enough about it to understand it.

The ludicrous statement that expatriates have prevented the establishment of a Department of Education, thus, presumably, depriving the Sudan of teachers, is not without interest. I have personally tried very hard to persuade my students that

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their patriotic duty lies in the schools, but I have had little success. The establishment of a Department of Education, approved long since, has been delayed by staffing difficulties, but there is considerable doubt whether, when it begins to teach in session 1962–63, it will have any students. The fact is that teaching is not attractive to our graduates, and, short of direction, there is no means of inducing them to take it as long as there are vacancies in the Ministry of Finance, the Foreign Service, or any other job which does not involve living in the provincial Sudan. This state of affairs is well-known elsewhere, and only malice or a bad conscience would attribute its Sudanese version to the diabolic influence of the expatriate.

PROFESSOR W. A. MURRAY
Head, Dept. of English,
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[I certainly regret that my remarks apparently offended Professor Murray and some of his colleagues. I only intended to document some of the passions and, perhaps, prejudices of the younger generation. His own attitude would seem to reinforce the accuracy and relevance of my impressions. Our difference lies, I am afraid, in that I think my "angry young man" worthy of sympathy, patience, and understanding, and he thinks him unworthy of true academic dignity. I am sure that this has less to do with race or politics than with temperament.—M. J. L.]

E. H. Carr

MAY I REFER to just one aspect of H. R. Trevor-Roper's criticism of E. H. Carr's "What Is History?" [ENCOUNTER, May].

Professor Trevor-Roper seems to imply that E. H. Carr supposes that objectivity means something coming very near to just a "progressive prejudice," that a historian should see only through "his own eyes", without attempting to construct a comprehensive picture of the historical situation discussed. Though I do not agree with Carr's assumption that history is a one-track road leading to Progress, One and Indivisible, I feel the Regius Professor does him obvious injustice on at least this point.

Carr actually never equated in his Trevelyan Lectures objectivity with a commitment to a "progressive" interpretation of history. In a passage quoted in the review itself by Professor Trevor-Roper, Carr just says that "the historian who is most conscious of his own situation is also more capable of transcending it... than the historian who loudly protests that he is an individual and not a social phenomenon."

If anything could be said against this passage, it is that it seems to be only too much of a truism. Surely one cannot conclude from this, as Professor Trevor-Roper does, that Carr implies that "'objectivity' is attained by swimming *consciously*... with the stream."

SHLOMO AVINERI
The Hebrew University,
Jerusalem.

Wesker's "Centre 42"

ARNOLD WESKER has got hold of a brave idea. When I first heard him talk about it I felt guilty and embarrassed. Ought I to share all this burning faith? Did he really think the trade union movement was capable of accepting his challenge? It seemed to me that he knew very little about it. I could see headaches and heartaches ahead for him.

But I suppressed my cynical unbelief. Or at least, I suppressed a good deal of it, throwing out just one or two warning hints, no more.

After all, let him find out for himself. No, that was not really my attitude. Rather it was a sad hope that his faith might make us whole. He did not know our shortcomings. He did not have a clinical close-up. His was the poet's vision, a kind of inspired lunacy.

So why not tag along for a bit, if not able to do very much to help, at least not hindering.

It was pretty much in that mood that I accepted an invitation to become a member of the "Centre 42" Committee.

Shortly afterwards I met Joan Littlewood and as on all things, she had a positive, vehement point of view. She said, "It takes ten or eleven years to make a good playwright. That is Arnold's job, and he should stick to it." Clearly it was protective goodwill towards an able young artist that prompted her to say so. We all know there is a job for the carthorse and a job for the racehorse. Why should not someone less gifted do the footwork, the slogging, all the tedious and exhausting organisational chores?

I took the point and did not press my own, which is, simply, that when a hazardous new venture is being launched it needs speed, it needs wings, it needs someone with a sublime capacity for disregarding flat-footed commonsense if it is to get started at all. Talking of commonsense, what about our museums, our art galleries, our lending libraries? And for those who prefer to remain housebound the prolific flow of our radio and television programmes?

No prince in earlier times could command the range of music, drama, and discussion now produced for mass consumption. All that is needed is discrimination in the selection of programmes.

So why Centre 42? What does Wesker and those associated with him think they can do that is not already being done?

There is commonsense for you. But two things are left out... the loneliness and the destructive passivity of forever having things done to you,

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never yourself taking a direct hand in making them happen.

If Centre 42 did no more than stimulate more participation in the promotion and enjoyment of the arts, that in itself would be wholly worth while.

Not many of us are self starters. We need the stimulus and encouragement that come from shared interests and activities. We have got to be helped to see, to hear, to reflect.

Also, various and continuous though our radio and television programmes may be, they are in their total effect, suffocatingly conservative. They are written from the point of view of the man on the top looking down. Festivals that provided opportunities for reversing this process would at least have novelty value.

Asa Briggs, paying homage to the late R. H. Tawney, writes:

> It was characteristic of his approach that in the *Acquisitive Society*, perhaps his most influential book, he called it a truism that active and constructive co-operation on the part of rank-and-file workers would do more to guarantee economic growth than the discovery of new resources or the development of new invention. Tawney wanted people to discover a sense of common purpose in society, and any obstacles to this discovery had to be knocked down.

William Morris had the same vision and fought against ugliness and everything shoddy with all his many-sided genius. Arnold Wesker, in the centre of the jungle of our capitalist world, is groping in the same direction. Its sickly paternalism makes him vomit. You cut a hole in a man's pocket, then give him sixpence to buy thread to mend it with. But you hold on to the scissors.

It may be we are a doomed community. It may be we lack the vigour, the originality, the individual dignity, to shake off the stupefying vapours of our hidden, and not so hidden, persuaders. In a world of take-over bids, giant commercial monopolies extending even to Fleet Street and Show Business, is it not just plain madness to run counter to prevailing trends? Even the House of Commons has succumbed. There are few private members any more. The Party machines are all-powerful. Within the machines any public or personal failing may be glossed over except the deadly sin of exercising private judgment.

When George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* he was sick and dispirited. But he had something to say worth listening to. Arnold Wesker belongs to the same great company of originals. And he is neither sick nor dispirited. A forward thrust has got to come from somewhere. It would be that at a time when the calculations of the professional politicians and the still more professional calculations of the economists have manifestly failed to rescue us from the torpor of a subtly totalitarian culture, the only thing left is to give the poet his chance.

JENNIE LEE

AUTHORS

Ian Waller is the Chief Political Correspondent of the *Sunday Telegraph*....

Sir Charles Darwin is the grandson of the "eminent and illustrious" geneticist, author of *The Origin of the Species*, and is himself a distinguished scientist. He is a former Master of Christ's College, Cambridge, and is the author of *The New Conceptions of Matter* (1931), and *The Next Million Years* (1952)....

Nicola Chiaromonte is the co-editor (with Ignazio Silone) of the monthly review, *Tempo Presente*, in Rome....

Leonard Schapiro's article in this issue is based on the introduction which he has written to a volume of scholarly papers on the XXIInd Party Congress, to be published by Praeger in New York....

Stanley Johnson's poem was read at the Encaenia in Oxford, 1962....

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